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THE ABSENT MAN

BY
CORNELIUS WEBBER



LONDON JAMES BLACKWOOD, PATERNOSTER ROW



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THE ABSENT MAN.

BY

CORNELIUS WEBBE,

AUTHOR OF

"THE MAN ABOUT TOWN," ETC.



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MR. HIPPY'S VAGARIES;

OR,

THE ABSENT MAN.

"Not a sentence—not a syllable of *Trismegistus* shall be lost through my neglect. I am his word-banker—his storekeeper of puns and syllogisms."—*Charles Lamb*.

MR. HIPPY—(as he was familiarly called, otherwise Harty Hippysey, Gent.)—Mr. Hippy was not a man of wit, though he sometimes approached very near to it. A Scotch friend, indeed, once called him "A man of *wet*" (meaning wit). "Yes," said he, turning his eye with a merry twinkle upon his flattering friend, "very *wet*." (And he took the hint from his friend's pronunciation to suggest this as the true reading of a couplet by Dryden which has been much disputed—

"Great *wet*——"

or drinking largely—

"Great *wet* to madness nearly is allied,
And thin *potations* do their bounds divide.")

He was simply a man of whim, which sometimes had blended up with it much playful pleasantry, and sometimes a spice of true humour, to season it: for he was a humorist, or I know not what humour is; an English humorist—the only humorist: and notwithstanding all his real or imagined unhappiness (and he had many good proofs to give as reasons for any momentary indulgence in complaint), he was, after all, of that happy nature, that though there was at times a savour of salt in his humour, there was no bitterness; nothing

that offended the good taste, or hurt the feelings, of his friends or associates. He had, in an eminent degree, that rare quality in a man who loved jesting and raillery, and indulged in them, that he could forbear and spare. If he thought a severe thing of any one, he would not give it utterance. He was in that respect, perhaps, a little too tender of others; for he sometimes spared those who did not spare him. I have seen him put down by an impudent dog or conceited booby, and have not a word to say for himself. I heard him once, and never but once, regret that he sometimes felt such an embarrassment and diffidence in society, that "For the life of him he could not say *bo!* to a goose when he met one; and he regretted this the more, because he so often met a goose, and lost so many happy opportunities for saying *bo!*" But he was eminently a humanist; and felt, I should say, more pleasure in abstaining from severities of tongue than he could have taken in indulging that unruly member in an unbridled and unbitted licence. Yet no man, I believe, had a sharper sense of the ridiculous, a keener eye at detecting the faults, and follies, and weaknesses of his fellow-men; and no man was more prompt and prone to pity and be patient with them, let them pass and say nothing, though he thought much upon them. If he could persuade any one out of an error, he spoke; if he saw that that was a hopeless task, he was silent. "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone" was the religious rule that governed and restrained him. He was, I believe, a really benevolent man in the main, if not at all times and in all things, any departure of his from that "even tenour" of a wise man's way nevertheless and notwithstanding. If he ever diverged from that "primrose path," and had to accuse himself with any sins of commission—or sins of omission, which are worse—no man more bitterly regretted them. His humour, his jests and gibes, were therefore innocuous, and hurt not; and this was perhaps their best commendation.

Mr. Hippy could sometimes say severities, but he

was best at a quiet reproof. Some one, speaking in contempt of the mind of a mutual associate, said, "You may put all the ideas he has under this goblet." Hippy silently drew from his pocket a Pickering copy of Horace, laid it upon the table, drained his goblet, and turning it over the little volume, the whole works, the wit, the playful humour, and brilliant genius of the beloved friend of Virgil and Mæcenas, and the favoured of Augustus, lay under that small crystal dome. The "moral" was obvious.

Among a knot of friends who were amusing themselves with cutting up a foolish acquaintance, he interposed by wishing that they would take a hint from Mrs. Rundell's advice to carvers—that "It is not necessary to cut up *the whole goose* unless the company is very large." He would often turn aside the shafts of ill-nature and ridicule by some such pleasant reproof.

Being in a drinking party where a dirty wit kept the table in a roar, Hippy sat in silence. His chair neighbour remarked it—"You do not laugh with our facetious friend." "No, sir," sternly replied Hippy, who loved wit much, but decency more;—"I saw a dirty pig this day who had just wallowed in the mire, but I did not feel compelled to hug him; I had too much respect for my white waistcoat." During the same evening he got into his old "merry cue," and kept his friends amused, and instructed too, without once calling in the aid of the low balderdash which some men mistake for humour. I could soon see that the company were very glad to exchange the cleanly tongue and the wholesome, healthy humour of my merry and wise friend for the cancerous comicalities of the dirty-minded gentleman upon whom he had so lately put an extinguisher. The club-room was full, everybody happy, the ale brisk as a bee—the waiters ditto; the Welsh rare-bits never so large and so good; the "natives," as fresh as a daisy, opened as if they were obliged to the knife that let them loose, and were uncommonly fat and fine. Puggleston was in the chair *pro forma*; Hippy faced him,

No singing was allowed, which kept the company select and sensible. Any gentleman who forgot himself so far as to strike up a song, found himself, before verse the first was concluded, in the hands of four stout members of the club, who quietly took him out by the legs and wings, with as much gravity as four undertakers would carry out a departed gentleman, opened the yard-door, set the little or big warbler down upon the cold stones, and left him there to "*sing* his eyes out;" and when he was thoroughly song-exhausted, and come to a sense of his situation, then, and not till then, was he brought back to his chair with the same grave honours, perfectly sane, and silent, and songless.

In the club that night was a little cocking fellow, an attorney, of the name of Scrubbs, whom Hippy had christened "Wormwood Scrubbs,"—his temper reminding him, perhaps, of that once terrible Waterloo of our once terrible London Volunteers,—and by that sobriquet he was known. Poor Scrubbs had, in the course of the evening, been all at once violently seized with a song about as long as himself,—“Will Watch, the bold Smuggler,”—and having been taken out and set down on the cold stones (as nurses do when a child screams), was, upon exhibiting all proper signs of contrition, taken in again, and put under the care of Hippy for the remainder of the evening. He sat, therefore, by his side, looking like a marginal note to Hippy; but he could not keep the little fellow quiet—buzz he would. Just as he was getting unbearably troublesome to the whole room, Hippy came to the rescue, and got rid of him. “I don’t know how it is, Scrubbs,” said he, “but you always put me in mind of the long lawyer.” “I do?” squeaked Scrubbs; and as he sat in his chair he swelled out like a barrister’s bag in term, stretched himself out importantly, till his toes almost reached the ground, and thought himself something for the time being. “But why do I remind you of the long lawyer?” inquired Scrubbs; and his little soul seemed to hunger and thirst for a compliment from his variable friend Hippy, who,

I must say, on the average, treated little Six-and-eight-pence anything but tenderly. "Why?" shouted Hippy, "why? because you are such a short lawyer; extremes meet, you know." And he glanced his eye, glowing like a coal with the fire of fun, over the whole entirety of Wormwood Scrubbs; and then, taking a mighty suck at his pipe, deliberately delivered such an endless mouthful of smoke as made a "total eclipse" of the poor little attorney. When the corner was clear again, Scrubbs was looked for in his place, and was gone! He had silently slipped out of the room "behind the cloud" which had so long concealed him—everybody said, broken-hearted, because Hippy would not patronize him; but attorneys are not so sensitive as all that.

Hearing a young friend with good ideas, but an inaptness for uttering them, struggling hard to give expression to a happy thought he had somehow got hold of, he said, "You have hooked a fine fish there, W——; but you do not seem to me to know how to land it. Play with it, boy; give it line; and when you have let it spend its strength, then haul in slowly and steadily, whip your landing-net under it quietly, and lift it on shore."

No man sooner saw through masks and the usual dominoes in which men disguise themselves in the masquerade of life. He penetrated in a moment through the thin disguises of a professing friend of his, who preached benevolence, but stood selfishly still when the time came in which he should stir. "If," said he, "he was over his dessert, and had split a walnut in halves, and (his dining-room hanging over the river) he saw you drowning under his window, he would not be at the trouble to throw out one-half of the shell if it would save you. But as soon as you were sunk 'full fathoms five,' no man would compete with him in the pathos of his exclamations—no one shed more tears for your lamentable death—and no one return so soon to his cigar and whisky-toddy, and forget you altogether, as though you had never been."

Like all good old bachelors and playful men, Hippy was fond of those dear little lumps of love—children, though he sometimes looked as if he was not, and, when surly, sometimes said that he was not. When dejected; and when vexed and disappointed with the world, I have heard him confess that they were the only living creatures with whom he had patience. If ever so troubled and touched with anger, the sight of a happy child subdued him; he became in a few moments calm, and his face began to shine again with good-humour—all the brighter, perhaps, for being so recently gloomed and clouded. I have heard him say, that, besides his love for a child, he felt a reverential fear of it, and stood in its presence as in the presence of an angel. I believed him, for I observed that while speaking to one his voice trembled with tenderness, his eyes glittered with a tearful gentleness as he looked into its sweet sinless face, and his hand fell slowly, softly, and fondly upon its beautiful head, as though he feared to touch with worldly hands so unworldly a creature.

“Sir,” said he, “we pride ourselves upon our superiority—but we are, in fact, inferior—to this little one. Look in his face, sir, and then look in mine, as I do in yours, and confess, honestly confess, who has the best of it. If you will not, think much of your knowledge, if you plume yourself upon it; I think much more of this child’s no-knowledge. I tell you, sir, our long acquaintance with the world is not worth one-half of his entire ignorance of it; our perfect understanding of a thousand volumes is not worth a fractional part of his dim, doubtful, twilight recognition of the first five letters of his gilt gingerbread alphabet. If he does not like his lesson he can swallow it—we are obliged to study many a bitter lesson which we feel we cannot stomach, and yet are forced to swallow. Look at this child, sir, and look at me, and—there is a glass in the room—look at yourself. Your yellow skin and my pale one will not, I imagine, compare one moment with the rosy red and *pure white of his*; nor our knowledge of a thousand hate-

ful things which we should have been happier—ay, and wiser—if we had never known, make up to us the difference between his healthy ignorance and our unhealthy knowingness. Look at his elastic movements: your back and mine are bent and bowed with poring fixedly over desks and books. Look at the rapid movements of his feet: my feet and yours are as slow as a tortoise's and heavy as lead. These, you will say, are indications of thought, and age, and wisdom in us; perhaps they are—perhaps they are not. Look at the spring, the jump, the bound, the leap of his limbs; and be ashamed of the hobbling, and stumbling, and fumbling of your feet. Mark the springiness of his spirits, which nothing can exhaust and weaken, and wish in vain that yours were as mercurial. Listen to his loud and happy acclamations when joyful; I can hardly hear *you*, you wheezing, whistling old fool, whether cheerful or sad. See his tears 'dried as soon as shed,' and wipe that rheum from your eyes. Sir, I tell you plainly that we cannot compete one moment with him, so do not let us attempt it. A gloomy day cannot make him gloomy; no, he has that undiurnal sunshine of the heart which does not depend on day and night, and makes all without doors bright and brilliant; while you and I, like old summer flies in autumn, crawl along the walls on the sunny side of the way, and, when the sun deserts us, shrink into ourselves. Sir, we are full-grown children, but not so happy as the growing."

He was standing, as he said this, in the playground of the school in which he had himself been educated—the biggest boy among a group of little boys, all as merry as bees—tasks and ferules, and silence-compelling ushers, and Latin accidents, all forgotten—their games and boisterous play all they now thought upon. We had just walked through the school-rooms and over the master's residence, but all was new to him except the old walls; master, ushers, and the schoolfellows of forty years ago, were gone—"Where?" asked Hippy, and his head drooped, and his eyes glittered with moisture.

We then walked into the playground—all there, too, was new. “Is there a stone here that I trod upon when a boy?” and when he had said this, he strode across the wide area, ran up to an old stone gateway, and stood for some time examining it, stone by stone, for some graven memorial of his schoolboy days. The facings of the arch were fresh done, and the old memorials gone; school friendships, recorded in initial-coupled circles—the schoolboy couplet—the penknife-engraved joke, and the cherished memorable day and year of some school-boy remarkable event—all were gone! We looked for his own name, once carefully cut in the centre stone, which it had cost him two penknives to carve—some painstaking stonemason had rubbed it out, and he turned disappointed and melancholy away. The happy successors to the seats, the studies, and the sports of him and his schoolfellows, once as happy as the happiest of those who were now enjoying their little hour of relaxation, were about him. He paused, and surveyed them with benevolent earnestness for a while, and surveyed them in silence. He thought, I doubt not, of his own boyhood, and of the long and not fortunate interval between that careless time and his daily-lengthening age and daily-accumulating cares. He roused himself, however, from the seriousness of his reflections, and for a while seemed to enjoy the sports, and laugh at the antic activities and merry monkey love of mischief of the little urchins, making the green one human bear-garden; and then, with a face half humorous, half serious, turned sulkily away, and, catching hold of me by the button, cried, “Come away with you, W——! I cannot bear to look at the happy dogs; indeed, I have no notion why I should have been so long tolerant and tender of these whipsters—fellows who will, by-and-by, dare to call us their grandfathers, and profanely laugh at us as a couple of old frumps and fools, and who intend now nothing less than to ‘push us from our stools’ and take our places. Just as we are congratulating ourselves how handsome we look after having been brownd and

yellowed by our last autumn—and, though we shook and shivered in the boisterous winds of winter, held on firmly, till another spring seemed kindly inclined to spare us—one of these young shoots stretches himself out and thrusts us off the tree of life, and in a moment we lie forgotten and trod upon at its foot. Come along, W——! I cannot bear to think on it!" and so saying, he hauled me forcibly away.

As we walked toward together that evening, he had forgotten all his cares, and was as lively as a cricket. Observing his shadow exaggerated by the moon till it stretched before him some twenty feet in length, he broke loose from the serious talk we were engaged in, by crying out, in his usual unexpected wild way,—“ Well, now I had no notion that I was so tall; and as I cannot possibly want so much of *Me*, as the Germans express it, I shall certainly advertize part of myself to let—the upper story, at least, unfurnished.”

Sitting composedly after supper over his concluding glass, he felt a fly travelling slowly down his nose, till it “pulled up,” as he expressed it, at the bridge: “Go on,” said he pleasantly, “there is no toll.” As I have mentioned his nose, I may as well add that it was none of the shortest, and he never denied it—he was too conscious and too candid: at any time, as he allowed, it was not a bad Sabbath-day’s journey for any fly in all Flydom to travel from the beginning to the end thereof. I remember some one remarking how very low down his spectacles hung on his nose, and wondering that they did not fall off. “Oh!” said he, “there is no fear of that; my nose is so long that, before my glasses could get to the end of it, I should be sure to overtake them;” and he threw himself back in his chair, and, with Richard, desecrated on his own deformity.

He was “a man of an unbounded stomach” for humour; and even in his short fits of spleen and passion there was some unexpected stroke of humour or some oddity of expression that diverted you, and made his ill temper as good as other people’s good temper. Seeing him one day

with a very long face and lowering brow, and impatient with all about him, I ventured to whisper, "You do not seem to be very happy to-day, Hippy?" "Happy!" he shrieked out, glancing a severe eye at me, as though he would look me through; "I only want a pair of tight boots to make me a misanthrope."

Most men, when in pain of body or agony of mind, find a sort of ease in an oath, or in some kind of violence. I have seen my poor friend pale and trembling with pain, and he never seemed so much inclined to laugh; his antic disposition was never so playful, and you were never so sure of something out of the way "to startle and waylay" you. When apparently most melancholy, humour always seemed to be lurking in the corner of his eye, and some preposterous pun lay ready to be perpetrated upon the tip of his tongue.

I was sitting with him one day while a deluging rain was falling, and flooding the street till it looked like a part of the river running at the bottom of it. Suddenly a great outcry was heard in the regions below, and then a sound of feet hurrying upstairs, and in a moment Mrs. Fondleman burst abruptly into the room, crying out, "Oh, Mr. Hippy, Mr. Hippy!—I'm ruined! I'm drowned! We shall be all swept away! What shall I do?" "What is the matter, madam?" he inquired. "Oh that gully! It's of no more use than a pepper-box or a colander! I've tried everything—it's stopped, and nothing never will open it!" It was enough to provoke a saint to see his imperturbable temper: "Nothing will open it, eh?" inquired he. "No—nothing; I've tried everything," said Mrs. F. "Try Morison's Pills," said he; "they remove all obstructions!" Mrs F. looked angry for a moment at his levity, and I know five hundred ladies who would have taught him better manners than to jest at such an unseasonable time; but she knew that her lodger would have his joke, if he got hanged for it, and so she laughed instead of being angry, and he, to reward her good-humour, then went down, and with an old *fishing-rod* puddled about the choked gully till he

cleared it. Mrs. F. then thanked him with a hundred curtseys, and was particularly careful of his muffins and crumpets at tea-time.

He used to tell this adventure of his with great glee and gusto. Waiting to get into the pit of Covent Garden theatre, he felt a pickpocket quietly ease him of his handkerchief. He took no immediate notice of him, but pondered his revenge. The prig did not move away, as is the custom of "the gentle craft" when they have hooked their fish: he was evidently going into the pit too, and only amused himself with taking Hippy's handkerchief to kill time till the doors were opened. But being one of that uneasy order of persons who cannot "let well alone" when all is well, and having a few minutes more to spare, he next turned his attention to Hippy's fob-pocket: then he reckoned it was high time to tell him what he thought of his exclusive attentions; and turning suddenly round and looking him full in the face, he said very coolly, "Have the goodness, sir, to wipe my face." "I wipe your face! Come, I like that uncommon much!" exclaimed the man. "Why should I wipe *your* face, when I've got one of my own to attend to?" asked the born for Botany Bay. "I repeat it," said Hippy, "wipe my face!" Just at this moment, Donaldson, the old theatre officer, bawled out, "Take care of your pockets, ladies and gentlemen!" Hippy looked in the filch's face significantly, and he took the hint. "If you've lost your wiper," said he, humbly, "it happens very fortunate that I've a wiper to spare: there, I'll lend you one with the utmost mildness;" and so saying he thrust a new silk handkerchief—not Hippy's—into his hand, and sneaked off. "While I was congratulating myself upon making so good an exchange of an old lamp for a new one, and conceitedly chuckling over my success in outwitting a pickpocket, there was a sudden cry of 'Officer! officer!—I'm robbed—I'm robbed!' Another voice cried, 'That's him!' and in a moment more I should have been in custody as a pickpocket, had not old Donaldson, when he approached

to seize me, known me, and exclaimed, 'Oh, no, it's not this 'ere old gemman, I'll take my davy! I've known this 'ere gemman these thirty years, off and on—he an't the man!' And he pushed through the crowd to look for the culprit, but the Botany Bay bird had flown; and I have now no doubt, nor had I then, that it was Mr. Allfinger, my furtive friend, who, to give me a Rowland for my Oliver, had pointed me out as the thief, and so got quietly off himself. From which adventure I draw this very important *moral*:—"Never to play with edged tools."

I remember his coming into the club-room that night, and telling us this amusing incident in his most amusing manner. He did not often visit the theatres; he had seen the old actors, and did not take very kindly to the new. One of the things which annoyed him most in the modern heroes of the buskin, was their over-ingenuity in finding more in Shakspeare's text than Shakspeare ever meant. He was so displeased with these perverse fellows, that he said with much bitterness, "Where the good old motto, 'Veluti in speculum,' used to be inscribed, there should now be written 'Commit no new sense.'"

This led to a long argument between us, which, as we had not concluded it in the club-room, was continued till we arrived at the doors of our respective domiciles, which were opposite to each other. He claimed the victory in the discussion—I denied it. As he stood knocking at his door, a cock crowed loudly. "Mind!" cried Hippy across the street to me, with his usual consideration for the feelings of another, and his usual readiness at a stroke of humour,—"mind, it was not me that crowed!" I was so much tickled with his pleasantry, that I handsomely acknowledged that he was right in his argument; and he was.

He was always catching you with some humorous turn of expression, or droll surprise. We were walking together once, when he observed a person with a striking peculiarity of vision coming on towards us: he was too *humane a man*, in general, to make deformities play-

things for his pleasantry, but he said, "I don't know what that man has done to me that he cannot look me straight in the face: he may have his reasons for it, and perhaps the principal one is as follows:—he squints."

Some one mentioning a friend he had with the joke-suggesting name of Twaddell, in an instant his eyes began twinkling with fun. "Now, are you so blessed as to have a friend so named?" He was assured of the fact. "Take him to your heart, take him to your house; cherish him—esteem him—set a proper value, if you can, upon so invaluable a friend; never give him up—never let him lose you; keep him yours for ever at any price; be bail for him—open your purse to him—let your door have no locks to him—let him be always welcome to come, and never welcome to go! That poor Epicurean fool, Apicius, he knew not what luxury was, not knowing the luxury of having such a friend! Oh that I had only a share in him—a sixteenth in such a prize in life's rich lottery! If he has a turn for advising, or is censorious of venial sins and little eccentricities from the straight path of right-doing, how I should love to offend him continually, and hear him lecture me by the hour, and, with a pleasant malice, look in his serious face the while, and think of nothing but his name, and feel irresistibly urged all at once to lift up my voice above the low, quiet, tender tone of his reproving and reprobating, with a loud alto cry of 'Twaddle!'"

Going over a picture-gallery with him one day, there was, of course, that old favourite story of painters, Potiphar and Joseph, among the rest. We passed on, and came to another picture, in which two lovers were seen warmly embracing: it was finely painted, and I stopped before it. "What is the story?" I inquired of Hippy. "Oh, the old one, Potiphar and Joseph!" he replied. "Nay," said I, "Joseph would have nothing to do with her, and tore himself away!"—"Ah! true; but he has thought better of it." A few days

after this I accompanied him in a visit he made to the new National Gallery. He was disappointed, and remarking its incapacity as its worst defect, he hastily glanced round it, and, as he came out at the door, looked up at it, and satisfied his discontent with it by saying "*To be continued.*"

Mr. Hippy was such a thorough humorist that he would even do you "a good turn" in the guise of a joke—tell you of an error, and teach you a lesson in a pun, and take some pains to work it out and make you see it. His friend Etty, he saw plainly, was killing himself with over-application in his profession, and want of exercise and relaxation. Some men would have preached him into a passion with moral and medical reflections; he took a longer course, but a shorter one in the end. He knew that his friend would at any time go six miles to look at a fine picture, so he committed a pious fraud by telling him that if he would walk with him to the suburbs he would show him a Canaletti. Accordingly he dragged him out of town, and on and on they went, till at last, as they were creeping along the bank of the Regent's canal, the fatigued Mr. Etty inquired, "But where is this same Canaletti?" "Oh, ah!" said his waggish companion, who had now perfected the pun, "why, here is the *Canal, Etty!*" and giving him a good-humoured push, he almost pushed him into it. Of course Mr. Etty saw the humour of the lesson, and laughed; and Hippy, to reward his placability, after dragging him over the bridge, and up through the pleasant fields to sharpen his appetite, gave him a series of "mutton chops to follow," and a bottle of sherry following them again, and a good dish of discourse on the painters who are poets and the poets who are painters.

In a party where a gentleman was bragging extravagantly, he quietly admonished him, and told him at the same time what he thought of him, by stooping down and patting a parlour pug-dog on the head, and quoting *the old saying*—"Brag is a good dog;" and then re-

moving his hand to a china dog on the mantel-piece, and patting that on the head too, adding—"But Hold-his-tongue is a better." My gentleman bragged no more that night—he tried another tack, and plunged into the deep waters of erudition—"He!" said Hippy to me aside,—“a shallow dog, that should not go into a foot-bath without corks under him!” At length, when the smatterer got into the peroration of a dissertation upon “the Digamma,” he could no longer bear with the evidently drowning puppy, and sternly said “Don’t go out of your depth, Mr. —, merely to show us that you cannot swim.” He did not often indulge in such a severity, so that he could the better afford it once in a way. Two or three instances of the like kind occur to me. I remember we were once talking of a very mawkish man of letters; Hippy very happily described him as always looking like a person of sentiment very sick of a sop in the pan. The fickleness and indecision of an old friend being under discussion—"He!" said he, "why, he is as undecided as a feather between four winds." On another occasion, when arguing with an obstinate old man, he described him as dogmatical: "for dogmatism, you know," said he, "is but puppyism full grown."

Hippy, too, would, with other wags, sometimes have his joke out, if he died for it. Having a tolerable appetite, not flinching from his glass, and being naturally disposed to inertness, he fell at last into a state of plethora, and was confined to his second-floor bed-chamber. "You must live lower," said Dr. Fumblepulse, as he fingered his wrist: "you must live lower." Hippy took him literally; and when the Doctor called next day he found him at full feed in the parlour: upon which the worthy physician remonstrated, and Hippy "explained across the table," and the Doctor laughed at his waggery, and Hippy laughed too, and was, of course, all the better for it next day.

He hated Dr. Johnson's hatred of puns, and loved them, and the worse they were (as parents love most,

their worst-favoured children) the more he petted them, the more pains he took in "getting them up," and playing and acting them. He once pretended that he had a decided objection to eating oysters, which I thought originated in his antipathy to destroying any creature with life in it; but I was mistaken, it was only one of his whims: for upon being assured by Mr. Pym, the fishmonger of Fleet-street, that "His natives opened larger than their shells"—"Oh, if that is the case, Mr. Pym," said he, "it must be quite a happy relief to be released from shells too small for them! Pray let two dozen of them stretch themselves out on my account." And his conscience being thus humorously satisfied as to the humanity of eating his fellow-natives, as he called them, he sat down to satisfy the cravings of nature.

I think I see the fine old fellow now—shortish, five feet four, or thereabouts—a little inclined to be corpulent—perpendicular—square-toed—with

"——— Atlantean shoulders,

Fit to bear the weight of mightiest monarchies"—

his "wild locks flowing" on either side over his whiskers, rather darker than the hair of his head, which was "a mingled yarn" of white and black, or pepper-and-salt coloured—with the slightest pretension in the world to a pig-tail, which I believe to have consisted of a tied-up bundle of from sixty to a hundred grey and black hairs (about an equal number of each, though I never counted them), varying in length from four to five inches. This pig-tail of his (if so it might be called, for a pig would have been ashamed of the insignificancy and utter uselessness of such an appendage) played at bo-peep behind his collar, which he wore high, as he was often troubled with a creak in the neck; and now you caught sight of it curling over the black velvet collar, and just long enough to see that it was intended for a tail; and now you suddenly lost sight of it, and saw it no more for an hour or two, till it made itself so troublesome by tickling his ear, that he pulled it out *impatiently*, and gave the refractory member a snappish

tug as he placed it in its proper position. What use he put it to I never could discover. It was too short by six inches to wipe the dust out of his eyes, in dry, windy weather, with the small tuft (like a twopenny camel-hair brush) which terminated it; and it was not long enough to dust his nice nose (of the Roman order) of the dry Irish, or Lundyfoot, which he took in moderation. I have sometimes conjectured that this tail of his was meant as a sort of *memento* that he had left something behind, for he was so forgetful a man that he generally omitted something which he wanted, when going out, and had to go back for it: sometimes his purse—sometimes his keys—and very frequently his hat! One thing only he never forgot—his double eyeglass! I should as soon have expected to hear that he had left his leg or his head behind him as his eyeglass.

I am rather inclined to think, upon maturer consideration, that this pigtail of his, after all, was intended for the children he was so fond of fondling to pull and play with; for those dear little condensations of love—those compact, compressed parcels of the very pemmican of the affections—(a small number of them going a great way with some people)—always found it out before he had nursed them five minutes, and seemed to make a point of introducing it to the notice of his admiring friends, who were apt to forget that he had such a thing as a pigtail about him. But they overlooked other properties of his in the same careless spirit. Strangers to him were not so neglectful. An honest, veteran Jack Tar, out of tobacco, stumped up to him once as he was “walking the hospital” at Greenwich, and begged to know “If his honour had ever any such thing in his locker as a little pigtail, and hoped no offence?” “Yes, my worthy old Wooden-wall,” answered my good-humoured friend, “here’s a little bit at your service,”—and he pulled out the pigtail from behind his coat-collar. Old Shiver-my-timbers instinctively felt for his own—drew a hasty contrast derogatory to Hippy’s—and then smiled slowly, reluctant feature

after feature, as if he feared to affront "a superior officer" to his face; but when he saw my facetious friend trying hard himself not to laugh, he "gave way," and they had the pleasure of laughing at each other, and with each other, and that is always pleasant to both parties. Hippy then slipped a tester into the hand of the old Nelsonian, and they parted, mutually respectful.

Mr. Hippy had another peculiarity, which distinguished him from "many another one:" he generally looked at you with his right eye wide open as day, and his left with the shutter partly closed. I think I see him now, after a long walk, sitting with his stick between his knees (as a resting sportsman grounds his gun), his hat placed on the top of it; or else with his knees wide apart, rubbing his pepper-and-salt smalls up and down with his hands; or patting his calves, of which he was justly proud, for they were as bouncing a pair as the twins of Latona; or rubbing his grey silk stockings and adjusting his half-gaiters; or loosening his knee-buckles, for "his ease in his inn"—his chain and seals dangling down between his legs, for the kitten to play with—his head cocked a little on one side—his hat the same, if on—his right eye cocked also, levelled point-blank, and ready to fire if anything started. His vision was double-barrelled, however, though he chose to fire with the off-barrel; but if he missed his bird with the first fire, flash went the other, and he had it "sure as a gun."

I have said that he loved puns: he did, "not wisely, but too well;" and it would not have been wise or safe in you, whoever you are, who do not affect those playful babies of your Mother Wit, to have uttered a grave objection to them in his presence, for he would have incontinently "set you down" as one of Bottom's brothers, in a transition state, but not thoroughly "translated." He gloried in puns, and loved punsters. He rejoiced, therefore, and was exceedingly glad to see the lively Tom Hood getting a good *ditto* by his drolleries, and hoped to live long enough to see him settled down

for life in a snug seat perched on that appropriate eminence, Pun-hill, in Shropshire. Peake had a prominent place in his affection. He hung upon Hook's pleasantries with a laughing relish to the last hour of his life. Poole was as refreshing to him as is a water-brook to the hart that panteth for it. He listened with evident satisfaction to the public buzz about Boz, and hailed him as "a merry and wise" brother. He was not indifferent to Dibdin. A plate was always laid at his table for Planché. He visited Buckstone once a year, because he found the "waters" thereof, when intimately mixed with French brandy, Dutch hollands, or Jamaica rum, benefited him greatly. He was unfeignedly pained to hear that Moncrieff was poor, sick, and forgotten; and wondered at the public neglect of one who had contributed so much to the amusement of the public. He—"albeit used to the melting mood"—hailed the whole brotherhood of comedians upon this world's stage, whether they played "the topping parts" and "the best business," and were allowed to sit in the first green-room, or only went on in a pantomime, and sat in the second. He did not estimate them by their success or their salaries: he knew too well that

"Full many a *Power* is born to blush unseen:"

that full many a "mute, inglorious *Munden*" there "may rest:" that many a man carries a letter upon the stage who could have indited a better: that many a man, "to Fortune and to Fame unknown," waits only till "some well-graced actor leaves the stage" to step into his shoes, and find them to be too small for him.

Mr. Hippo had, indeed, a large organ of "Veneration" for all men that excelled, whether in the grave or the comic walk of life. As he was tolerant of every one but the intolerant—fostered, when he could, the tender shoots and germs of genius, wherever planted—however high, or however low—and where the young genius wanted not his care, sat silently and "mused its praise," be tolerant of him, good World!—be

"To his faults a little blind,
And to his virtues very kind,"

for he was so to yours Listen, then, and not impatiently, to some few more of his whims and vagaries, with which I shall wind up my poor, imperfect, mixed memorial of this grave and gay old man.

I caught him once near Spring Gardens, where the cows give up their milk "for a consideration" to the demanding dry mouths of the "babes and sucklings" who make that spot a sort of out-door nursery. He was apparently lost in studious consideration of something serious, about which he now looked infinitely grave, and now chuckled and grinned delightedly. I broke in upon his "brown study," and inquired what it was that so "perplexed" him in the "meanders of his brain." He confessed that he had been filling up the time he had had to wait for his friend Spiffle, "somewhere nigh," by satisfying himself—as logically as he could—that the little stunt Park cowkeeper he had in his eye, and to whom he directed mine, was, though he thought it not, to all intents and purposes a publican; and "thus 'twas done:"—"The dairyman kept his cows in public?" Granted. "They were therefore *public cows*?" Granted again. "The tap-keeper also kept his *public 'owse*?" (*Cocknice* for public-house.) Granted. "If the one was a publican, *cateris paribus*, the other was a publican?" Not granted; but I laughed and gave a House of Commons "Oh!" which satisfied him quite as well. Thus would he "trifle time away."

Spiffle soon after joined us, and we wandered on, listening to Hippy lecturing on the past, present, and future state of St. James's Park, till we found ourselves in that little paradise of children and nursery-maids, the enclosed part of that pleasant place, so happily improved, and handsomely laid out with lofty tree and lowly shrub, islands "remote and inaccessible, by ducklings only trod," the green *oases* of the not unwholesome waters winding around them, and dappled with and dabbled by ducks of all kinds, foreign and

domestic—always interesting animals, from association, for one cannot look at them without thinking of green peas, and green peas remind one of the green spring, when both peas and ducks are in their prime. I know no spot where a contemplative, benevolent-minded man can spend a sunshiny hour more delightfully; and accordingly it was a favourite haunt of my gentle-natured friend, Hippisley. We were no sooner arrived at the water's edge than a stir and a commotion were visible throughout the entire duck navy that makes the lake so lively. Expresses, one would think, had been sent off, immediately that Hippy was seen approaching, to all the islands and little creeks of that miniature Mediterranean, announcing the arrival of the well-known, regular old gentleman, laden, as usual, with three or four penny-worth of biscuits; and he was hailed by these navigators as gladly as a victualling-ship visiting a fleet with fresh supplies when run out of stores. Every duck in those waters seemed to know him from afar; for he had no sooner taken his station, and dropped his anchor, a walking-stick chair, than about seventy sail of the line of ducks were seen scudding along for the northern shore, in one well-ordered fleet; while solitary sails in the distance, answering the signal of the commodore, that noble three-decker among duck-craft, a swan, were seen, beating up in the offing.

While this lively movement was going on, Hippy was composedly rummaging every large pocket about his person; for, as he was always a walking library, large pockets, and plenty of them, were necessary. He generally put the book he was reading at breakfast into his pocket, to finish it in his morning walk; and as he breakfasted every day and generally forgot the books deposited there on the days preceding, the consequence was that he carried a pretty extensive library about him. Accordingly, as he rummaged for the biscuits, but found them not, first Dryden was turned out in one volume; Pope followed him; Cowper, Thomson, Gray, and I know not who besides, all turned out, and lay on all sides of

him, while he rummaged on; still no effects were visible. An expression of disappointment spread over his benign features. "The murder was soon out:" he had bought the usual bagful of biscuits, and had left them on the counter, he supposed—a common act of forgetfulness with him—for he has been known to buy a new hat and walk out of the shop, leaving both new and old hat and his change behind him, till called after by the hatter. As he stood rummaging his pockets now he looked vexed, which mightily amused Spiffle, who loved to see him *nonplussed*. The quacking of the expectants grew louder and louder, and the demand for supplies was intense: a deficient Chancellor of the Exchequer standing before a refractory Committee of Supply could not have looked more inextricably perplexed. What was to be done?—the biscuits were evidently *non est inventus*: he threw himself upon the mercy of the duck members, and rising from his seat, and placing his hand on his heart, stammered out an apology: "I really beg your pardon!" cried he, bowing: "I have quite forgotten the usual. I beg your pardon!" He seemed, or affected to be thoroughly ashamed of himself, and, turning hastily round, snatched up his seat and shot away,—of course clean forgetting Pope, Dryden, Cowper, and the rest. I saw to them, and gathered the intellectual harvest up. Meanwhile that spiteful little dog, Spiffle, stood sneering and laughing at the humorous folly of his friend, and I laughing at Spiffle, that he did not appreciate the humour of the thing better. The fact was, that it was partly an acted scene, got up to mystify Spiffle, and give him a momentary advantage over him, in return for all the lasting advantages he had over Spiffle; but he saw it not.

As we went along in the greener depths of the Park he made Spiffle laugh good-humouredly. Seeing a sheep scratching behind its ears with its hind legs, "Look, Spiffle," cried Hippy, "look at that leg of mutton scratching that sheep's head!" Spiffle forgave him all his late folly, and left off snapping at him, like the ill-

natured little dog that he was. Spiffle had no sooner ceased than one of those French poodles you see running about (after respectable young ladies, too) without small clothes, and their stockings all about their heels, took it into his alien head to bark at Hippy, as he loomed up the Mall. He took no notice of the gross mistake he was making in barking at him, attributing it perhaps to his ignorance as a foreigner. The poodled creature therefore persevered in trying his patience. "Sirrah, sirrah!" at last cried Hippy, "I shall not come again to your dispensary! You exhibit *bark* enough, but no *whine*. I shall prescribe the last, if you do not alter your tone;" and shaking his fist at him, Monsieur took the hint and fled.

And now Spiffle had another snap at him on his gross addiction to punning. Hippy was not to be put down by any hypocritical or even hypocritical objections to punning. If he heard you making yourself ridiculous by urging grave objections to the scholar's sport and contemplative man's recreation, he perpetrated the worst possible pun he could get at in the hurry of his indignation, hoping that you would thus be compelled to ring the bell, pay your bill, and leave the room, if in a tavern; or order your cab, chariot, cloak, umbrella, or walking-stick, if in a private house, and take your sullen departure. He held no faith with any such heretics: either you loved a pun or hated him,—there was no medium, no middle ground. "Love him and love his dog:" despise him and kick at him, and you, by implication, thrust out your violent toe and protruded your sneering lips at him, Hippy, his loving lord and master. He loved wit better than quibbling, of course: so a man of moderate fortune loves turbot better than soles, but he puts up with soles. Wit is too expensive for every-day use. I will here give some few specimens of his puns, and of his humour generally.

It was Mr. Hippy who, when his barber was going to sleep while dressing his hair, roused him by vociferously striking up "*Ah come rapida!*"—"Ah comb

me rapider!") When, some few years since, a creation of Peers amazed and amused the political world, and, among the other lifts, Lord Grosvenor was made Marquis of Westminster, Hippy had no partisan objection to the measure; he only said—"I hope we shall be indulged also with a Marquis of Mile-End, and a Viscount Off-the-Stones!"—Some one censuring a smart, flashy habit he had of wearing his hat cocked on the right side of his head, in a most perilous attitude during blowing weather, he accounted for it satisfactorily, I think:—"You must know, sir, that I am leaving off this hat by degrees; and, as you may observe, I have left it off on the left side already."—Some one attributing the wants of Ireland to rich absenteeism,—"No, sir," said he, "it is not absenteeism, but absent-dinnerism which is the misery of the poor Irish."—Seeing a large fashionable party rise from their seats to do honour to "the lion" of the evening, who was about to depart, he said,—"*This must be the great leaver which Archimedes wanted to move the world.*"

He took great liberties with our old, homely proverbs. A friend of his, who reverently respected those "old saws," with worn-out teeth, according to Hippy, used to say that he treated the "wisdom of our ancestors" scandalously. I never heard him use a proverb without misusing it; he took a humorous pleasure in perverting it to his prankish purpose. A person of consequence having paid him many flattering compliments, I took leave to congratulate him on the honour which must attach to a person "praised by Sir Hubert Stanley." "Never mind, boy," was his indifferent answer; "it will all rub off when 'tis dry." If you complained of a high wind, he would mutilate another old proverb, and say—"It's an ill wind, you know, that blows nobody." If you pointed out a well-dressed woman, he would say—"Fine feathers make fine *beds*." "What is one man's steak is another man's *poisson*," &c. &c.

Since his death, I have heard the following trait of his benevolence (which, with him, was a matter of im-

pulse, not of reflection, and sure to have some portion of his usual whim mixed up with it). An old attached friend is my authority for the anecdote, and though he has not vouched for its authenticity, it bears such veritable marks of belonging to the character of the man, that I unhesitatingly repeat it. In a severe winter's night, he was accosted by one of that unfortunate class of beings who make the road home of a "dismissed bachelor," if he has far to go, one long trial of charity or temptation. The poor creature detailed an artless story of want of lodging for the night—such a night as it was—which plainly told the want of money to procure one. The miserable seem to know at a glance who will listen to them, and who will not. She hit upon the right man in fastening upon my patient, benevolent friend, whose ear and pocket were always open, and continually appealing to each other. Hippy, the kindest of men to all about him—high or low—tender, at times, to weakness,—an attentive man, who could not stand side by side with a duck in a shower, and not offer him the use of half his umbrella,—was not the man to turn a deaf ear to the poor girl. He was touched by her story, and troubled by her distress, and spoke to the wretched woman so kindly and tenderly, that, unused of late to the sweet accents of compassion, her sorrow choked her utterance as she said—"It is not often that I am spoken to as you speak to me!" My friend was silent; but "Silence was pleased." If Mr. Hippisley had a failing, it was that he was, too frequently, without money to meet the exigencies of the moment. He was in that predicament now: he rummaged all his pockets; they were "to let, unfurnished." "What was he to do?" He cast about for a resource. A private house opposite was brilliantly lighted up: it was plain that a happy party were assembled in it for enjoyment. If the doors are shut on such cheerful occasions, the windows, winter though it be, are sometimes partly open, and, better still, sometimes the hearts of those within. "Stand beside me, and stir not away," he said

to the poor creature, who still clung to him. He then turned up the collar of his cloak, pulled his hat down over his eyes, and placed himself under the windows. The shivering wretch wondered what he meant to do, but she obeyed him. Hippy had a well-toned tenor voice, with much natural pathos in it when he chose to put his heart into his song. He gave a loud "hem" to clear his throat of the fog, and immediately struck up Campbell's beautiful ballad "The Exile of Erin." There was an instantaneous hushing of the happy hubbub within. He sang it as he could sing it; and, as he finished it, the door slowly opened, a liveried servant stepped out, and gave a beckon of the finger. Hippy approached him, concealing his face as much as he could, when the man slipped several shillings into his hand. Shadows of female forms were, at the same moment, seen listening behind the window-curtains. "There, my poor girl," said he, "take this;" and he put the money into her hand with a kind pressure of his gentle hands. The destitute creature was speechless with surprise, but her tears spoke eloquently enough. "I ought to give *your* friends another song for their money; but, bless their good hearts, if they knew how what they have given is applied, they would be well content, and think the ballad cheap," said he. And before the street wanderer could find words to thank him for this uncommon exertion of charity, he shot off, in a minute was out of sight, and, I have little doubt, went flying along with a chuckling laugh and a "Ho! ho! ho!" as was his habit when anything particularly tickled him; the whole affair, in his eyes, a joke, a whim, a flight of fancy—something to narrate at club, as an amusing anecdote of somebody else—for so, I dare swear, he afterwards related it, and not as an act of his own pure, though whimsical, self-forgetting benevolence. Glory be to the charitable, whatever moves them to be so, for it is still charity!

One anecdote more of his humanity. A friend—not "*open as day to melting charity*—" remonstrated,

when walking with him one hard winter night, because he gave alms to a poor wretch who begged them with piteous tones. "How can you—a man of your discernment—be deceived by such impostors?" was the merciful reproof of his companion. "Sir!" answered Hippy, "I have an unfailing ear in judging of these sounds: I knew the ring, sir; it was no counterfeited coin: it was good, current, lawful misery, sir!"—and he shook off the arm of his uncharitable friend, as St. Paul shook off the viper, and walked sullenly by his side till he made a handsome apology for a double affront to him—doubting his judgment, and interfering with him in a matter of feeling—the minor offence; and shutting up his heart against his fellow-creature—the major offence.

This same friend met him next morning, but having taken his reproof to heart, which was somewhat harsh and angry, I allow, instead of pausing to have the usual good-humoured gossip with him, he uttered hastily a "How do you do?" and before Hippy could say how he did, he was gone. Hippy was not the man to be snubbed in this fashion: he immediately resolved on a humorous revenge—such a revenge as he knew would touch his twopence-loving crony to the quick. He walked into the first coffee-house he came to, and, calling for the materials, wrote a long, circumstantial letter in answer to his friend's short inquiry, giving him all the particulars of his health, and thus commencing:—

"Dear Jack,

"As you were kind enough this morning to ask 'How I did?' but did not wait to hear how I did, I beg leave to inform you that"——

And then he went into the details at length, and wound up all with this postscript:—"If you had given a penny to that poor wretch last night, there would have been no need for this expenditure of twopence to-day, postage money, for we should have met as usual, and I, as I always do when I am asked 'How I do?' should have made answer there and then." Jack took this reproof better than the first; he saw there was no use in quar-

relling with Hippy, came to him at night, begged his pardon, promised to be a good boy, and was immediately forgiven.

"Elia" should have known him, for they were wags somewhat of a feather, though Hippy was the smallest bird. He loved Elia. He would have hugged him, I think, for walking up to a lamb in a meadow, playfully sporting about its dam, as if dancing to delight her, and tenderly accosting it with "Hah! Charles!" Or if he had seen him that same morning, at the mouth of Mr. Milton's mews—not he of Paradise, but Piccadilly—standing face to face with that worthy stable-keeper's she-goat, Nanny, his hand on his heart, looking like a pined lover in the presence of his mistress, and singing, with all the passion of Mr. Sinclair, that most fervent of vocal-lovers,—

"O Nannie, wilt thou gang wi' me,
Nor sigh to leave the flaunting town?"

Elia would, or I know him not, have "aggravated *his* voice," and, Lamb-like, bleated, in simple accompaniment, till Nannie baaed an agreeable reply.

All kinds of animals, besides being objects of his tenderness, (for he was womanly kind to them, and loathed the man who used them ill), were especial favourites with his humorous fancy. He talked with them, and made them almost speak to him. How have I heard him bandying wit with an ass upon a common as to his preference of thistles to softer herbs,—the sage creature giving his reasons for his strange perversity of taste, and Hippy combatting them, and showing him how wrong he was—how indefensible! How have I stood laughing by while he has held a long dialogue with some little wagging cur, in which, of course, nothing which Pincher said for himself was audible; but when you heard my friend's questions, you could have written down exactly what Pincher was supposed to have said, word for word—the question was so suggestive of the answer. All this while Pincher has kept looking up at him with *his sharp, bright, intellectual eyes*, and wagging his ex-

pressive tail, which, as it was too large for his little body, kept it vibrating about in pleasing alternation from side to side. Both body and tail, however, seemed to express his lively thanks that he had rendered his poor thoughts into such decent English sentences. It was a humorous sight to see. A dog at his own door—upon which a dog will sometimes presume—perhaps barked at him as he “leisurely passed by,” like one of Mr. Wordsworth’s sleepy sheep: this sometimes vexed him when he was “not in the vein” to be barked at. As he was a friend to dogs, he did not like that one of them should dislike him. In general, however, when he was so mistaken, as he called it, it only provoked his fancy or his fun to saucy humours and short answers.

He made everything talk, animate or inanimate, no matter; they all found tongues, or an interpreter of their silence. Walking through one of the vegetable-growing plots of ground in the open parts of Battersea, he stopped before a small plant, just shooting up, which he could not make out, whether it was cabbage or lettuce, so he stooped and plucked it up by the roots to ascertain its pretensions: it was young lettuce. While he was examining it, and nipping its leaves, and smelling at it, I was startled at hearing the weakling vegetable expostulate with him thus:—“So, because you are lamentably ignorant, and don’t know a lettuce from a cabbage when you see one, I am to be put out in my growing, and perhaps deprived of my existence altogether!—Is that right and proper?” “No,” said Hippy, and he made a fresh hole in the earth with his finger, and planted it afresh. As we passed over the Common, six horses, drawing a lumbering wagon along the dusty road on a dry, dusty day, startled me with the following dialogue:—

Captain to Ball. “Ball, my dear fellow, what do you think of a pail of water?”

Ball. “A pail of water, quotha? I don’t know—ask Dobbin.”

Dobbin. “I have my own thoughts of a pail of water. But what do you say, Draggie?”

Draggle. "Say? I could say much; but what do you say, Dapple?"

Dapple. "A pail of water, and no dust on it! What's your opinion, Lively?"

Lively. "Why, that it's like a fly in a cow's mouth—a pail's of no use among six of us! Make it a trough-full and I'm agreeable."

It was this whimsical mixture of the ridiculous with the grave which made my friend so amusing a companion. It would have cured a man of a nine months' melancholy to have heard his "quips and cranks" when he fell into this vein of fooling. He sometimes, I believe, cured his own sick disposition with that "soft appliance" nonsense—a "balm for many wounds—a cordial for many fears." Oh that a man with such a gentle, genial nature as his should ever sink so low in heart and spirits as to confess—as once he did—that having made overtures of familiarity with a strange terrier, his snapping and growling surlily at him, as if he liked him not, and believed not in his proffered kindness, touched him almost to tears! How low, lonely at heart, and deeply dejected must that man have been who could have his feelings wounded and subdued by such a circumstance, at which a brute would have laughed, or sworn, or kicked! We are strange creatures all of us, and my poor friend was one of the strangest. We were walking through the beautiful meadows of Wandsworth while he was telling me this incident. A cow, close by, left off cropping, and, lifting her head, looked him gravely in the face. "Mind your milk-making," said he, half-tetchily, "and don't mind me." A few minutes after he had made this singular confession of his infirmity, we got talking upon the character of C——, a fat, huge attorney, who had the reputation of acting as a go-between in some tricking affair, in which D—— and E——, both fat attorneys too, were concerned. All the parties were of Gray's Inn-square. "A go-between!" exclaimed my friend, *now full of his fun*, "I don't believe it! D—— lives

on the east, and E—— on the west side of the square, it is true, and yet I don't believe it! There is not room enough between them for C—— *to go between.*" So his spirits fluctuated.

We had not gone far before Hippy paused to indulge in his old humour with animals. A hackney-cab was drawn up by the roadside, and as the poor crippled bay which drew it had nothing else to do, he was stretching out his long, scraggy ewe-neck, intently gazing at a cow cropping away in a beautiful little paddock, up to her knees in green meat. If ever a horse expressed envy in his looks, that poor three-legged town-traveller did. Hippy soon found words for him. "I envy that cow," quoth the poor hack, and he coughed deplorably: "she has nothing to do but make milk, and I have everything to do to make money. Cows are happy creatures, while we——"—and he went on inventing all sorts of horse-discontents, for some minutes, in the happiest vein of his odd humour, the envied cow occasionally putting in a word or two, which he affected not to hear so distinctly, as she was guilty of the truly English vulgarity of speaking with her mouth full.

As we were under an engagement to dine with Spiffle at his lodgings on the north side of Clapham Common, we wandered on through Wandsworth, and tracking up that pleasant winding stream, the little brilliant Wandle, through flowery meadows and much agreeable greenery and scenery, we came, by a long circuit through Tooting, round at last to Clapham. When we had got among the golden furze which so richly colours the Common, we heard a great tearing and rustling among the prickly bushes: "There is that stupid ass again at his old work!" cried Hippy, thinking that it was that same beast which he had argued with, the other day, on the absurdity of eating furze and thistles, when there were softer edibles within his reach. What was our pleasant surprise, upon stepping up to the bushes, to find that it was no ass at his meal, but our friend Spiffle, botanizing! "If you are culling simples, sir," said Hippy, glancing

over the bush at him, "stretch out your hand this way—here are two scarce specimens—myself and friend." Spiffle looked up, saw who it was, and rushed through the furze to shake his hand and mine, tearing his inexpressibles most inexpressibly in his ardour to get at his old friend; but he did not care about that, he was so glad to see him. Hippy, of course, rallied him on his new pursuit—botanizing; but Spiffle only laughed, and was uncommonly agreeable. On we went towards his lodgings as merry as grigs, but we had not got far before we fell in with two handsome young ladies, comely and rosy as the dawn, who were botanizing too. They looked up—saw it was Spiffle who approached—smiled and reddened, and then curtsied. "Oh, Spiffle!" cried Hippy, in an under-tone, "I'm ashamed of you!" We were introduced, in form, to the charming girls, and as it wanted a good hour yet to the time for dinner the ladies joined us in a stroll round about the Common upon further botanical researches. Hippy was, in five minutes, as much at home with the young ladies, and they with him, as if they had known each other for five years. They saw, at a glance, that he was a good-humoured humorist, and took to him at once. Spiffle, I thought, was a little jealous of their sudden partiality, and yet seemed pleased that they should admire his friend.

If you know Clapham Common, gentle reader, you will remember that there is a large horse-pond not far from the front of the decent little church that looks across the Common. As we wound round it, Hippy, plotting a joke, which was to be worked up at Spiffle's expense, directed his attention to that pond: he looked at it—it was full from the late rains, and apparently deep. "I know this pond extremely well," said Hippy. "How? why?" demanded Spiffle, curiously, for he expected to hear of some new *gaucherie* of his friend. "Why, in my inadvertent, headlong haste and hurry to get upon the Common, the other day, I walked right *through it in its broadest part!*" "La! Mr. Hippy," cried

the young ladies, "what could you have been thinking of?" "Oh! I was thinking of getting among the grass as soon as possible, no doubt," answered he. The ladies laughed—I laughed—Hippy laughed too—but Spiffle! he went into convulsions:—his hat tumbled off his head—he dropped his walking-stick and the specimens of simples—the tears rolled from his eyes—he staggered and leant against the railing at the pond-side to support himself, and hoh! hoh! hoh!-ed, and hah! hah! hah!-ed, till the Common rang all round with the echoes. "Hippy, Hippy," he cried at last, "you'll some day be the death of me! Now, what could you have been dreaming about?—a man like you, at your time of life, to walk, in the middle of the day, plump through a pond almost deep enough to drown you! Ho! ho! ho!"—and he went off again. "But perhaps I ought to have told you," said Hippy, very quietly—"that the pond was perfectly dry at the time." And now it was his turn and our turn to laugh at Spiffle, for the tables were fairly turned, which we did right merrily, till Spiffle flew into a passion, and then flew off, under pretence of seeing "whether we were not keeping Mrs. White waiting for her dinner." The two Miss Whites enjoyed the discomfiture of Spiffle mightily, for they knew the temper of the little man right well—how hard he was upon the follies of other people, and how he cottoned to his own. We were soon at the dinner-table, where Hippy made his peace with Spiffle, who for a time looked sulky, by taking a glass of sherry with him, after he had properly honoured the ladies; by paying some few particular attentions to his likings during dinner; and, after the cloth was cleared and the ladies had retired, by consulting his opinion upon an Ode which he had just written. Spiffle—no judge in such matters—affected a severity of judgment. He condescended to say—"I like the Ode very well, upon the whole; but it is not quite *lofty* enough for me." "Oh, if that is all, that may be remedied," said the placid poet, smiling. We passed a most delightful evening,

the ladies having joined us again at the tea-table; and then got back to town.

In the following week Hippy called on Spiffle. "Well," said the wag, "it's done!" "What is done?" asked Mr. S. "The Ode—it's *lofty* enough now!" continued Hippy. "What do you mean?" said Spiffle. "Why, as you objected to it that it was not *lofty* enough, I have taken it up to the top of St. Paul's this morning, and given it to the winds, and when I last clapped eyes on it it was then three times as high as the cross. Is that *lofty* enough for you?" "You will never be wise, Hippy," said Spiffle, rather spitefully. "I hope not," said Hippy, smirkingly. This story of his was, of course, all fudge—he had done no such foolish thing; but it was his humour to say that he had, to make Spiffle laugh at him, and lecture him, and accuse him to his face, and behind it, of most egregious folly. Meantime, while his good-natured friend was flogging him for his faults, Hippy simulated to look sheepish, and much ashamed of himself, and very penitent, and imploratory of forgiveness; and all the while was laughing in his sleeve at his monitor. It would have done a man in the last stage of melancholy "a power of good" to have seen little Spiffle affecting the Dominie on these occasions—Dr. Busby was not half so big, and Dr. Keate rather less than Dr. Busby. It was dramatic to behold him—how he strutted about, and crowed, and clapped his conceited small wings, which the wag could have cut in a moment, if he had liked to "Up, Hippy, and at him." Spiffle felt that he was something when he could beard such an old lion in his den, and poke straws at him between the bars. It was the happiest thought he ever had—to *think* that he had him down, and could do anything with him—let him get up, or keep him down, just as he pleased. His maxim was evidently—"Spare the rod, and you spoil the Hippy:" so he laid on with all his might, and as he lashed he lectured. This was the practice of my good old birch-amorous *schoolmaster*, who between cut one and two commonly

said something apposite; and between cut two and three some moral axiom still more to the purpose; and so on, till I had had my promised and performed round dozen—for I kept count against him, and if he was about to pay me fourteen, instead of thirteen, to the dozen, I set him right)—and then would wind up all with a few general remarks upon the undeniable difference there was between rewards and punishments. So Spiffle paid off Hippy, and so he kept count against him, and paid him off in his turn, little Steevy always getting much the worst of it. Poor Spiffle!

On another occasion, the same fair and brown party went botanizing over the same spot, when coming, in the course of their ramble, upon a solitary pond, irregularly shaped, and greenly overgrown with water-plants and duck-weed, and not a duck to be seen enjoying it, Hippy cried "Oh that I was a duck!" "You are a duck," said the fairest of Mr. Spiffle's fair friends, archly, and she blushed, as she laughed, modestly, as if she felt afraid that she had said too much. "Am I?" said he, "then will I delight myself duckly!" and giving a loud "quack!" which made the Common ring, he ran headlong towards the pond, as if he meant to plunge into it. The ladies shrieked, and Spiffle uttered a cry of fear, as, at the moment, he really dreaded that his extravagant old friend would make a jump of it! But the mad wag pulled up in time, and nimbly sprang across an angle or creek in the pond, somewhat more than five yards wide—a tolerable leap for an old boy who was always complaining of infirmities; and, having done this, he came laughing and capering round again in comic circles, which reminded me of the late Mr. Munden in *Crack*, when he went tacking wide about the stage to circumvent "the brandy and water which some gentleman had left." Having had his fun out, he made his bow to the alarmed young ladies. "Oh, Mr. Hippisley!" cried the fair sister, "I'm sure it was a great mercy you were not drowned!" "He?" shrieked Spiffle, spiteful at the interest they took in his facetious friend,

"he'll never be *drowned*!" Hippy made no reply, except such a one as his speaking eye could convey; but tucking the two ladies on e under either arm, he trotted off with them, and left little Spiffle, as he said, "To gather a trifle more venom, with the other wasps, on the Common." "D——n the fellow! what *will* he do next?" exclaimed poor Spiffle, in tones which seemed to whimper with vexation.

Clapham Common was the stage of another comic scene between Spiffle and Hippy, which I shall relate as it was related to me. They were strolling together over that pleasant flat, a few days previously, when their attention was drawn to a party of persons, belonging to the spot, who were arranging an extempore cricket-match, but wanted one more to make eight of a side. As Spiffle talked rather loudly to his friend how much he delighted in a game at cricket, and what a fine old manly sport it was, the young men surveyed the bold speaker from head to foot, saw that he was little, but well built, and looked as if he could run; and next, they asked him to be the eighth man on the side of Lark-Hall-Lane, against "All the World and the Clapham Commonites." "With all my heart, gentlemen!" cried Spiffle; and glancing at Hippy an expressive look, which plainly said, "Now you will see something," he stripped off his coat and waistcoat, threw them down upon the turf indifferently, and said, authoritatively, "Hippy, mind my clothes!—Now keep your eye upon 'em—don't stir an inch from 'em!"—and then slowly strutted away up to the stumps, as if he particularly wished to draw the public attention, and give them time to do so well, to a particularly tight little fellow, in a pair of very tight trousers, so tightly strapped under-foot, that he walked as though he was going somehow upon springs—with a jerking, jumping sort of motion, like one of those toy-frogs which children set leaping by tightening the catgut string which makes them so elastically lively. Spiffle looked indeed as if *he meant to do great things*; and it was observed that

the opposing eight surveyed him with some apprehension, while the selecting seven hugged themselves upon having picked up "A prime hand!" Not so thought Hippy: he foresaw how all this vapouring would end; and humorously grumbling to himself, "So, Master Spiffle, I am to be your watchdog, and mind your clothes, am I? Very well! I will be a true dog!"—and so saying, he placed the clothes close to the stem of a young tree—pulled out a large silk handkerchief, fastened one end of it to the stem, made a noose of the other end, slipped it over his head and round his neck, and then quietly squatted himself down upon the coat and waistcoat of a man who hated to see a wrinkle in his clothes, and entertained the same horror of a crease as a late king, of particular memory, did in his best-dressing days. The bystanders stared to see a staid old gentleman so tied up to a sapling, and laughed, and cut sundry jokes at his expense, which he was glad to hear, for he desired that his whimsical position should not pass unappreciated, and the more they laughed, the graver looked he. Faithful to his trust, he kept his seat, and gazed sagaciously about him as the game went on, nothing disturbed by hearing that "He was a funny old fellow!" "A rum old joker!" "A queer codger!" "A drover's dog tied to a post in a sheep-pen!" "A good-nater'd bear at a stake!" and lastly, that "He was doing it for a wager!"

Meantime the game went on, and Lark-Hall-Lane was beating "All the World" to nothing, although Spiffle missed catching three as easy balls as ever came to hand in a cricket-field, and came in vain; for Spiffle "successfully lost them all," so some one said, when he was sure he had them, and only got three stunning raps on his fingers, which made him shake them deplorably, and whip them into his mouth to ease their pain, amid loud exclamations of "Hah, butter-fingers! Who taught you to catch a ball?" "Why don't you put your gloves on, lady's fingers?" "Unlace your stays, dandy!" "Unbutton your straps, Snip!" "There he goes again

to get a no-go!"—to all which suggestions and remonstrances "did Hippy seriously incline" to listen and laugh, as he saw the conceit of Spiffle gradually being taken out of him.

At last it came to his turn who had been so eminent a field's-man to go in as a batsman, with only two notches to get, ere Lark-Hall-Lane might proudly say, that it had "tied All the World!" Cheered on by his surrounding admirers, Spiffle seized the bat with a sort of nervous spitefulness; but in a moment he recovered himself, and stood so firmly and confidently at the wicket, that any one would have thought he meant nothing less than knocking the spire off Clapham church with his first ball. "Play!" cried the bowler for "All the World;" and the ball flew like its warlike namesakes. Lark-Hall-Lane trembled from one end to the other, for all depended now upon his play. Spiffle never moved his bat, but, rather scientifically, tipped the ball, and turned it aside from its direct aim at the stumps; and as it rolled ten yards away to the right, making sure of a notch, he started off, as fast as his straps would let him, for the other wicket, amid shouts of laughter, and cries of "No—no—keep to your wicket!" "That's play!" "No go!"—when the poor hunted devil paused midway, looked wildly about, then started back again, and just got back time enough to the stumps to ground his bat before the ball was thrown up at them. Luckily for Spiffle, the opponent field's-man, who should have stumped him out, slipped where the cows had been while delivering the ball, and it fell short. Spiffle now looked triumphantly around, but was nervous nevertheless. "Now, my dear sir, mind what you're about! Do play very steadily!" begged his partners. "Oh, don't you be alarmed! It's quite safe! Never was bowled out in my life!" said Spiffle, briskly. "Play!" was called once: Spiffle took his ground, nodded to his partner at the other wicket, as much as to say "Get ready for three runs, which will win," and then gradually grounded his bat. Just at that moment an ass,

who had been, apparently, looking on at the game, but really wanted to cross over to the other side of the Common, weary of waiting for an opportunity to pass, in the most inopportune way in the world—(just like him!)—deliberately walked across between the two wickets. Spiffle indignantly waved him off, and as indignantly cried “Stand back, booby!” but he paid not the slightest attention to what he said or did, and quietly walked on. “He’s come to advise you!” “He knows what’s what!” “That’s your humpire!” vociferated three of the groundlings. Spiffle looked as if he could have kicked him, but he kept his temper and his ground.

“Play!”—the ass having gone his way—was called again:—the ball flew—the bat flew—the stumps flew three several ways, and the bale another. “Game!” shouted the “All the World” boys—“Lost! lost! lost! by only two!” murmured the Lark-Hall-Lane boys—“Provoking!” “Shame!” “Wretched play!” “No use!” “How could you think?” “I wonder you should!” “Bless me!” “Really I must say!”—were the various consolations of his seven enraged partners, which the bystanders kindly mixed up with a few consoling caraway comfits of a coarser sort, in celebration of the great occasion. Spiffle tried to brazen it out, but that would not do; to lay it to the bat, but that would not do; to the unfair play of the bowler, and that would not do. So, finding that neither violence nor pretension would do—that there was no virtue in turf, and that throwing stones would break windows, he affected to shiver, and want his coat and waistcoat, and saying “He left the entire merits of his play in their hands, to settle it how they liked,” he walked away, the Clapham Commonite critics in cricket paying him “the passing tribute” of crying “Make way there for the *nob* player!—the nonsuch!—the nonpareil!” and advising him to “Take care that he didn’t catch cold—after his great exertions!” One, more compassionate than the rest, said “You look very white, sir, and so does your shirt! You’d better go home to bed!” Spiffle affected to take

all these sneers as compliments, and dignifiedly said, with another wave of his hand, "Oh, never mind me, my good friends! Look after the other players! I shall do very well when I cool down!"

Thus honoured and honouring himself, he retreated, with philosophic coolness, to the spot where Hippy was minding his clothes, who, laughing at and enjoying his defeat, was yet too good-natured to add to his annoyances; and, having untied himself, gave up the resentful jest he had meditated in return for making him a watch-dog, and paid him such friendly attentions during his attiring as served to sweeten his chagrin. "I did not play amiss—eh, Hippy?" asked he. "No," said Hippy, "you played extremely well—for the opposing party." "That's just like your good-natured equivocal commendation!" said the little man, pettishly. And if the large-and-little-dog-like understanding which existed between them was thus far disturbed, it was further disturbed shortly after, when the losing party invited Hippy himself to join them in the next match, *vice* Spiffle, superseded; and further still when his old friend went in, first hand, and got nineteen notches ere he was caught out—not bowled out—for the one is honourable and the other not to be tolerated among the crack hands at cricket. Great was the applause which his old friend gained, every hit being received with clapping of hands—his batting being vastly admired—his running pronounced wonderful—and not one ball going out of the bounds! "Capital play for an ould un!" was the unanimous verdict of the spectators, when he was caught out at last, and laid down his bat quietly, and quietly walked away.

From that hour Spiffle heartily hated his old friend Hippy; and thence dated all the little bickerings and heart-burnings on the one side, so cordially met with good-humour on the other. Small was the soul of Spiffle—it was the mere selvage of a soul: large was the soul of his friend—it was soul enough for himself, and a handsome *surplusage* left over to make up for the skimping

deficiency of his associate, and render his "cutty sark" of a soul long enough to make him decent before company. Spiffle was a vain and a conceited fellow, and it was not, therefore, to be wondered at that such a being should not long affect the man—an old man too—who excelled him in all things—in activity—in mind—in heart—even in youth, for, notwithstanding his years, his spirit was more youthful than Spiffle's! Spiffle boasted of his superior knowledge of the world: he had much, but it was all of the world worldly. His friend's knowledge of the world, while it had the experience of age, had the trusting simplicity of youth:—he loved the world with the cheerfulness of the young man, who sees something to admire everywhere and to enjoy in all, and will not give up the good there is among men because there is bad among them too. If he laughed at the follies of some men, and was sometimes impatient of them, he laughed at his own, and was always impatient of them. Now Spiffle did not believe that he had a folly belonging to him, except his sort of love for the ladies; whereas he could count up five thousand follies in his associate, which were unpardonable follies—egregious follies, and once said that "The man who owned to them as his could not be a wise man, though he might not be quite a fool." He thanked heaven that he had none of them, and, being only too merciful, tried to wink, and not see them in one for whom he entertained a something not unlike friendship, and not like it either. He hated, therefore, that is to say, he did not love—(and where there is an absence of love, there will very soon stand the presence of hate)—the intimate companion of his hours of leisure and pleasure, but rubbed on as well as he could with him—now roughly—now smoothly. If he sometimes wished the door of his heart(which was too small a parlour for such company) was shut against him for ever, no sooner did he hear his foot on the scraper next day than he flew downstairs himself to let him in, and was glad to welcome him again! No sooner did he observe him

pass by the house than up he threw the window, called after him by name, entreated him to come back, and, if he complied, cried "D——n it, what have I done, that you should pass *my* door, as if my name was not on the plate, and you could not recollect the number?" "I pass thy door?" would the relentless friend exclaim, "I'll see thee d——d ere I'll pass thy door! If I should not drop in, then, as usual, it will not be because I less affect thy company, but simply because I shall not look to feel at home in such society as thou must consort with and keep: for where the host is not a pleasant fellow, look not to find much pleasure among his guests." So did these intimates spar, jar, and rub and drub each other continually, and still hold on their course together.

Among his other eccentricities, Mr. Hippy was a great haunter of old book-stalls, and, as he used to say of himself, was learned in labels. It was his custom to go the round of these out-door libraries periodically, to have what he called a book-fuddle. When he was rich—*i.e.* when he had a few shillings to spare—he bought the book that took his fancy, after dipping into it deeply, or, if he could do it at one standing, reading it right through from end to end; for he never took the liberty, which some of your book-stall readers assume, of doubling down a leaf where he left off, and returning to finish his reading the next day. The late Mr. W——, a great reader in this way, bullied poor humble D——, the bookseller, for daring to sell a book which he had left unconcluded: "He must have seen that he had marked where he had left off!" When Hippy was poor—as sick working-men say when they throw themselves upon the funds of their benefit societies—he "declared upon the box;" *i.e.* he had a perusal of the old books in the boxes out of doors for nothing—making no purchase; and as the worthy bibliographers knew him well, he was allowed, undisturbed, to have his quiet read out, as a sort of *cum privilegio* student. As he was, at times, the most absent of men, and as he was at all other times, except when in bed and asleep, seen in company with a green gingham

umbrella, which had become brown with time, as your green things will do, many a good jest and tale had they to tell of "that very eccentric old gentleman who sometimes stood all day beside their doors, reading as if he would never leave off." If it rained when he halted at a book-stall, of course he held his gingham up. Some book soon held him all attention—he forgot himself and everything—and for hours after the shower was over, there might you see him standing, umbrella-shaded, poring away, totally unconscious of time, hunger, everything—even his umbrella. And all this while he had got the very book he was going through such painful inconveniences to read snugly forgotten in his own library! Sometimes, as he darkened the shop by so doing, the worthy follower of old Lintot and old Barker would quietly step out, bow to him, gently take his umbrella out of his hand, shut it up, tuck it safely under his arm, bow again, and leave him to have his brown study out. Hippy would just look off the page, stare surprisedly in Mr. Folio's face, feel satisfied that the good man had no evil design upon his darling umbrella, submit quietly to the operation, and turn over a new leaf. Mr. Vellum, not so adroit as Mr. Folio, met with no little resistance, but he got at the gingham at last, and walked indoors with it, Hippy following him up in blank astonishment, but saying nothing. Mr. Vellum meant him well. As Hippy had been full five hours on his legs over good old Mr. Burton, the worthy bookseller thought a little doubled-up rest would be a relief to his perpendicular friend: so, when he re-entered his shop, he placed the umbrella, now dry and crisp again, in one corner, and, pressing his hands gently upon Hippy's shoulders, forced him down into a chair in another corner. Hippy just showed a glimmering look of consciousness that he was not ill-using him, resigned himself entirely to his hands, and read on, and on, and on, just six hours longer, forgetting dinner, tea, everything, for his dear book—too dear for him, or it would incontinently have been added to the Hippisley library.

At length the time to shut up shop arrived; and not till then did Mr. Vellum rouse him from his studious trance. "Dear, bless me! is it so late?" cried Hippy, and snatching up the brown-greenness, he scuttled fast away. Sometimes, if Mr. Vellum saw that he was getting rapidly towards the port of *Finis*, and it was the hour for closing, he took him by the arm, led him into the parlour, and left him to wake up himself, when he had done and ended. Then, and not till then, would he speak to him, and beg to have his opinions at large on the author, and on old books and authors old in general, over a crisp crust and Cheshire, and a frothing pot of brown Whitbread or black Barclay, to neither of which taps was he indifferent. How then would he launch out upon the undying books and names of the great old poets and glorious old prozers, till he genially warmed up the heart of honest Master Vellum, and made him proud of his "choice collection of old authors," snap his fingers at the new, and bless his stars that he was not James Blackwood, or John Murray—doomed, unhappy men, to be dry-nurses of the *young* "great heirs of Fame," not yet of ripe age enough to come to their inheritance. The frugal supper over, and the glass and the pipe being filled, and emptied, and refilled, just as the sixth glass was concluded, the iron tongue of time tolled twelve: "Double-scoring!" cried Hippy, rising, "but I leave you, Vellum, to settle the reckoning," which he was proud to do. Then the worthy bookseller—just for the walk's sake—saw Hippy and his umbrella—both happy, he that he was wet, his gingham that it was dry—part of the way home, which ended in his going all the way, and adding three glasses more, "which, together, made nine," in Mr. Hippy's chambers, and getting three parts fu'.

At one shop, which he had not often visited, he was known as "the old gentleman that's as deaf as a post," because when a house was on fire at his back, one day while reading there, he heard nothing of the uproar all

around him, and still kept reading on; and when the first spirt of the fire-plug, just opened up behind him, sent a deluge of muddy water over him, which mightily amused the mob, he, all unconscious still of what was going on, composedly spread forth his umbrella, took the drenching which he got for a smart shower, thought what good it would do the growing peas, and, resigned to all the dispensations of heaven, read on.

At last, as he was standing shoe-quarter deep in water, two of the engineers—civil engineers I call them—taking compassion at his obliviousness, snatched him up in their strong arms, and set him down indoors at the bookseller's. Then, and not till then, did he perceive the conflagration; and as he was the last to perceive the destruction going on, so now was he the first and foremost in rendering all the assistance in his power.

Good souls! the "gentle craft" in general were most considerate of the humorous, odd, eccentric, unaccountable old man, and respected his grey locks and his grave looks when he was not in one of his merry cues; for then there was no absence—he was all presence, and all consciousness—"the world was all before him where to choose" his joke, or his good-humoured gibe, and some one to be merry or whimsical withal.

During these fits of studious absence my dear old friend used to do the most out-of-the-way things in perfect innocence of what he was about. While he was breakfasting in his own chambers his favourite cat, Tibby, took the liberty to help himself to the greatest portion of a round of toast, and make off with it. Hippy, of course, threatened him with punishment for the wanton offence, "Because," as he said, "if he had wanted it, he might have had it by asking for it." Next day he breakfasted out of town at the house of a friend. Toast was on the table, and, in a vacant chair, his friend's cat sat looking at it, and making observations in his own mind upon toast in general. Hippy no sooner laid eyes upon the innocent creature—no more

like his Tibby than I am—than he seized him by the ear, and, pinching it, cried out—"So, sirrah, I have caught you—have I? I told you yesterday I should! I'll teach you not to indulge unduly in a taste for toast!"—and he was about to pinch and punish poor Tom of Tooting, for the offence of Tibby of the Temple, had not his friend interfered, and proved a clear case of *alibi*. "True, true," said Hippy, "I beg his pardon! The *venue* does not lie in this county." And then he entered into a long dissertation upon the association and mis-association of ideas—comic and serious—quite a Coleridgean display, his tea and toast growing cold, and his egg as hard as a bullet, the while.

He has been known, in these fits, to begin a letter to his grandmother with "My dear Miss;" and end one to his mistress, even in his young days, with "I am, honest Harry, yours anywhere, and especially here, at Will's Coffee-house, with wine and walnuts for two. Come over, and let's make a night on't!" His mistress was a Harriet—his friend a Harry; and hence the jumble. What must the modest young lady have thought of an invitation from a young harem-scarem, forgetful fellow, as he was then, to "make a night on't?" Writing, on another occasion, to the same dear young lady, as the luncheon things were on the table, and he was near-sighted, sometimes he dipped his pen into the ink-stand, and sometimes into the vinegar-cruet—so that every here and there an *hiatus* of a sentence, or more, occurred. He concluded, passionately, "Forget me not, my dear Harriet, for you are the only hope I have on this side of"

Will's Coffee-house, at Two."

The rest of the sentence, being written in the best vinegar, was unreadable.

He was, as I have said, an entertaining companion to walk with, whether in town or out of town, for he would strike out poetry from the stones of the street;

and make merry with a milestone—pluck a joke out of the heart of a field, or pull down one within reach of your hand in any hedge, or a bunch of jokes, if one was not enough, like filberts or blackberries. As we were passing through about ten acres of promising young cabbages, *Glumpy*—(a nick-name which Spiffle had somehow got tacked to him, and it stuck fast)—who was one of the party, being a vegetarian, was so greatly struck with the sight of so much of what the poets call “greenery,” that he exclaimed “Beautiful!—a fine crop, an’t it, Hippy? I never saw a crop so promising—” “Yes,” interrupted the old boy, “promising of future flatulence.” And then he began running his rigs upon poor Glumpy’s tender partiality for parsnips, his favourite vegetable, and, among other things, asked him “If his father ever pinched his ears?” Spiffle acknowledged that he had, too often: “And what vegetable were your papa’s pinches like?” Glumpy could not say. “You can’t say—and yet you vegetable-eaters dare to assert that your diet keeps the intellects clear, which beef and mutton cloud and stupefy! Why, a chaw-bacon would have guessed that your pa’s pinches must be pa’s nips (parsnips)!”—an interpretation which put poor Glumpy, who was naturally petulant, and detested a conundrum, into a swingeing passion; upon which Hippy cried out triumphantly, “And you caterpillar-eaters pretend, too, that a cabbage-diet keeps your passions cool! Look at me—a man given to the bestialities of beef-steak and mutton-chop—*et hoc genus omne*—see how cool I am, you Pythagorean!”

Dinner over, however, our host had almost innocently disturbed the peace between them by drawing us out into his garden to look at a monstrous specimen—two feet long—of that strange plant called Vegetable Marrow. Hippy, with his ludicrous descriptive powers, catalogued it as “A vegetable bolster for one,” and recommended Glumpy, as he admired it so much, to take it

to his bachelor's bed, "as it might perhaps induce green vegetable dreams." "Now, my dear friend Hippy?" cried Glumpy, imploringly. "Well, well," said the old boy, "I have done;" and observing a fine large codling apple hanging temptingly over little Glumpy's head, he whipped him up in his long arms, and, pushing him up among the boughs, told him "He might pluck that large apple, because he was a good boy, and didn't mind his Hippy,"—a practical joke at his expense, which he bore with great good-humour.

After our lickerish "fancies had had their fill" of fruit, our host—a wag in his way—turned the tables upon waggish Hippy himself, much to the amusement of Mr. Spiffle, by leading us a handicap race to look at what he called "A fine bit of Morland;" and getting us up into a corner of the garden, "Here it is," he cried, pointing to a pigsty. We were all taken in—Hippy in especial, as he was a hearty admirer of the homely genius of poor Morland, and thought some of his small landscapes little inferior to the greater ones of Gainsborough. Nine fat porkers blessed and made happy the house and heart of Mistress Bessy Brindle, mine host's fecundate sow. It was a pretty pastoral sight to see those innocents of future sorrow—sage, onion, and bread-sauce,

"Lapping their souls in one extreme sweet pleasure;"

and it would have been "a real blessing to mothers"—some mothers—as the vendor of Soothing Syrup inditeth it, if they could have

"Come but and see my lady sweetly sleep,"

surrounded by her sweet sucklings: they might have learned a lesson in household economy—how to make the most of a small apartment and the least of a large family of small ones. Hippy "enlarged," as the religious say, upon "the improving occasion," and kept the worthy patron in a perpetual roar at his provoking *drolleries*; and as he was a man of no great reading—

his favourite serious volumes being Drelincourt, Mrs. Glasse, and The Whole Duty of Man; and his only comic one dirty and dull D'Urfey—Hippy dished up the heads of inimitable Charles Lamb's learned "Dissertation upon Roast Pig," making its more erudite parts "plain to the meanest capacity." And greatly did the unlearned Theban delight therein, for he laughed till Echo laughed again,

"And all the woods resounded back his roar."

This done, Hippy graciously appended, by way of rider, a pleasant anecdote, of his own picking up, touching the gourmanderie of a member of the swinish multitude.

He ceased, and before we had time to compliment him with a laugh, o' the sudden such an uproar sprung up in the pigsty, "standing nigh," that you would have sworn the Nine were suddenly bewitched and mad.

"They have overheard the story of the pig, and they enjoy the joke!" cried our host. All ran up to see what bred the direful commotion; the cause was soon made manifest. Mr. Spiffle's spaniel, having a greater relish for a genuine bit of Morland than his master, had poked his nose and head between two posts forming architectural parts of that rude specimen of the rural composite, a pigsty, and having got his head there, there it stuck. Not out of sympathy, but scorn of his weak bewailings, the porculent brotherhood were shrieking with cruel laughter at his mishap, and mocking his loud-yelped distresses; and had not Glumpy rushed to the rescue, and our host belaboured maternal Bessy with a broom, master Fido's foolish head had paid forfeiture for its intrusion, for it was plain that the old sow had made up her mind to it as a mouthful—a *bonne bouche*. Before we had all ceased laughing at this humorous incident, coupled with the story he had been telling us, with that strange rapidity of mind which was one of his remarkable characteristics, Hippy had got tooth and nail into a hot dispute with Mr. Spiffle upon the comparative merits of Gainsborough, Wilson, Morland, Ibbotson, and Marlow, and was hitting and slashing away at their later rivals,

Naysmith, Collins, Wilkie, Jock Wilson, Lee, Constable, Hosland, and Co. Spiffle was all for the new school, Hippy for the old; both were so far in error, and partially prejudiced. Hippy's worst objection to the modern landscape painters was in the article—colour. "Looking at your modern landscapes," he said, "I am always conscious of one prevailing error in all of them (always excepting those of the eccentric, and yet admirable Turner, whose eye, as far as colouring goes, must be diseased): that they do not colour as Nature colours, but are either above or below in that important part of a good picture. Their skies are not blue, but drab; their sunsets not golden, but gray; their foliage not green, but whitey-brown, or dirty brown, or dingy black, looking more like boiled tea-leaves than leaves tinted with the lively green with which Nature paints her spring and summer foliage. Nature is sacrificed to Art—the juggler tricks and sleight of hand of Art—not the ingenious refinements and elegancies of Art, smoothing away her roughnesses, and perfecting her imperfections, but broadly mocking her with coarse, extravagant mimicries of her sweet face and unadorned simplicity of mien, and serious jestings at the 'sweet disorder in her dress.' Art, instead of standing a humble pupil in her presence, rudely pushes her aside with a 'You teach!—you paint!—you colour!—you describe! We know some tricks worth all your nature. Good woman, stand apart! Come not between the wind and our nobility!' Humbly she sits down—patiently is silent, and sees her rude, great children mock her to her face—looks over them at their work—beholds

'The stately comeliness of forests old'

dwarfed down into small shrubs of most unsightly shapes; and trees stand upon their canvas, tinted as she never tinted them—blue in the tops—yellow in the centre, black in the lower branches, and nowhere green, but she is patient still, and pitying, smiles and turns away—hopeful some day that the spoiled sons of Art *will know her better, and their fantastic master sit hum-*

bly again in her great presence, and learn of her, not teach her, and despise her as a dunce.

"Another fault in your modern painters is—that the leaves of every kind of tree in one picture (which, in nature are as various in form as the armorial shields in a large book of Heraldry) are, one and all, of the same form and structure—all round—all heart-shaped—all triangular—all tongue-like, according to the humour of the painter: not various, opposite, distinct; and all are tinted and coloured alike—not of every hue, and all hues green, but of one unnatural tint, not hers. Nature is not a mannerist, nor is she so limited in invention as these would make her. Her varieties of vegetable form are almost as numerous as the objects of her creation. They may seem to look alike, but look again—look closely—and they are 'alike, but oh, how different!'"

"Well," said Glumpy, putting his word in, "you say that Nature loves variety and gaiety of colours: so do our modern painters!"

"Yes," retorted Hippy, "but she colours as she should colour: she does not paint as modern artists paint: her nose yellow, her lips black, her forehead purple, her hair blue, her eyes green, her cheeks grey, her chin brown, her teeth black. But enough—enough!—Spiffle, ring the bell for fresh glasses and a fresh subject, a glorious bowl of punch!"

Alas, poor Hippy!—whimsical, croaking, kind, gentle, happy, unhappy Hippy! It was his last bowl, and his last rubber at the expense of irritable, nagging, niggling, little Spiffle! Both are gone, Spiffle and Hippy! I could have better spared Spiffle. They died in the same week. He loved to be wherever Hippy was, and follow where he went. If he overtook him on his road from these low regions to the immortal skies, I warrant me he snubbed him to the last; that the ill-assorted pair went quietly quarrelling along till Peter hailed them from the heavenly gate, and called them both to order; and that the gentle, generous spirit of Hippy took all the blame of their indecent brawling upon himself, and kind-

ly catching his companion spirit by the hand, begged earnestly, lovingly, and with all humility, a heavenly rest and lodging for them both.

“Take to thy lap, dear Earth, the good old boy,
Who did thy tasks with such a loving joy—

[sometimes interspersed, April-like, with a little loving sorrow]—

Wherefore lie lightly on his temples grey,
And let the turf that wraps him flower in May.”

GAETIES AT GRAVESEND.

“TWADDLE,” said Snubbs to me, the other evening, as we sat making the punch to our liking, “was you ever at Gravesend?”

“Well,” I replied, “as far as I can recollect, if I must confess so much, I don’t think that I can safely say that I ever was. Why?”

“Now, why the deuce, Twaddle,” cried Snubbs, “couldn’t you say yes or no!—Con-found you, one would think you were in the witness-box, answering questions before judge and jury, with an Old Bailey barrister watching the moment when to trip you up! But that is the worst of you—you will not come to the point at once, and in few words!”

“Well, then, if I must reveal my ignorance, I never was at Gravesend.”

“Then it is high time that you went there. How you do bury yourself alive! And all for what? To save twenty pounds out of an income of a thousand a year, which you do not enjoy to anything like the tune of five hundred! What is the use of all your toiling and moiling, if you have not health?—and when I look at your parchment-like skin, you seem to me not to have much of that to boast of. Why don’t you do as I do—get out of smoky London, and rinse your lungs well with wholesome draughts of pure, fresh air? What is

wealth when wanting health? There is no making a thousand a-year after the sexton has thrust his grave divining-rod into the ground to find out a vacant nine feet of earth to bury you in."

I listened calmly to my friend Mr. Snubbs, for I knew his way, and let him have it. He is a well-informed person in general, but, as it happened, in this particular fact of my income, he was not exactly correct, for it is somewhat more. But no matter. To appease him, however, I said "Now don't utter another word of reproach"—for I saw that he was in one of his snubbing humours;—"I will go to Gravesend when you please, and how you please."

"There, now," said he, "that's spoken like a man and a citizen!"

"But," I suggested, "is not that celebrated watering-place not quite so fashionable as frequented—in short, is it not, if I may say it, a *little* low?"

"Oh, my lord High-and-Mighty!" he broke out: "what! you are beginning to toss your head, and affect—"

"Now, don't be so very severe! Really——" —I was about to excuse myself, but he interrupted me.

"I tell you what, Twaddle, I've no patience with you!—Give me the lemon, do!"—and he showed evident signs of excessive irritation.

I promptly replied, and deservedly, I think, "If I am at all justified in making such a remark, I must say, Mr. Snubbs, that you seem to me to have had quite enough of the lemon already."

"Sir!" said he, firing up like a furnace.

"What has, all in a moment, so soured your temper?" I demanded; and, feeling my dignity as a Ward-deputy assailed, I stood upon the defensive.

"Pooh!" said he, impatiently; and snuffing the candles, put one out, and then pushed the snuffers and tray off the table.

"Really, Mr. Snubbs," I was on the point of saying, "when I reflect——"

"You reflect!" he retorted.

I could bear his temper no longer. "Mister John Snubbs——"

"Don't Mister me, Sir!" he abruptly interrupted: "Hand me the lemon-squeezer—do!"

I handed it to him, hoping to allay his evident irritability by the readiness of my condescension. It was lost upon him. I have often thought that I don't know whether any one has much to thank his stars for who has the fortune to have a man of genius for his friend, persons of rare intellect are so much in the habit of treating all other persons, when below them, so cavalierly—stand so much upon their superiority—and make their poor friends feel so frequently the difference there is between them. However, I endeavoured not to rebel; and, to turn his anger aside, I said, good-humouredly, "Come, now, Snubbs, don't be so crusty! Stir the fire"—he did, but rather severely, as I thought;—"light your cigar"—he lit it;—"and I'll give you a toast *and* sentiment."

"Oh, with all my heart!" said he, but still a little sulkily.

"Well, then—'Here's may we have in our arms what we love in our hearts!';—a favourite toast of my Lord Chesterfield's."

"Hah!" he remarked, laughing ironically, "I know what would be in *your* arms in that case."

I was curious to know what; I accordingly inquired.

"Either the Mint or the Bank," he answered, "for I can safely say that you love nothing so much as gold."

"I love nothing but gold!" I exclaimed, in astonishment at so barefaced an assertion.

"Yes, that is your god! I assert it! And if ever there should again be another political *run* for it, I know who will be first in at the whipping-post."

I had made up my mind not to be offended with his sarcasms, so I laughed. Even that did not please him.

"D—n it, Twaddle," he cried out, "it is quite provoking that there is no provoking you! But, there—I *forgive* you!"

"Because you have tried to offend *me* and I wouldn't be offended—eh?" I put in, by way of a poke in *his* ribs.

"Well, well, let it pass! The punch is good—isn't it?" he inquired, good-humouredly.

"Capital!" I confessed—it would have been a sin to have denied it.

"And you'll go to Gravesend, like a good boy?"

"Well, I don't know—why, yes, decidedly so."

"When?"

"To-morrow, if you like."

"Agreed, *nem. con.* I'll name the party. Sister Fanny, Mrs. Jones, Jones, his brother Tom, Wilson, and Tomlins: they will all be ready and willing to go with us at a moment's notice. *They* are wise enough not to put off pleasure till a rainy day, but 'take it while 'tis May,' as some poet says. By the bye, I think *I* have said it somewhere? I beg pardon for quoting myself, though it is becoming very fashionable, and a very self-patronizing fashion it is."

"A very nice party," I remarked; "we shall be very happy!"

"Yes, I hope so. But ah, Twaddle, now indeed we miss *one* who would have been happy with us! Poor sister Fatima! How *she* would have jumped to be one of the party! But she is gone to Gravesend before us!"

I do not hesitate to say that I started at so untimely a jest; but, remembering my friend Snubbs's inveterate infirmity of humour, which would prompt him to have his joke if *he* died for it, or anybody else, I passed it over "in solemn silence." He had touched a tender chord in my bosom; however, and it responded to the touch. Miss Fatima Snubbs was to have been Mrs. Tomlinson Twaddle; but she is no more! Peace to her *manes*!—If I recur for a moment to my loss upon that melancholy occasion, my passion will, I trust, bear me out in exclaiming, as I did, "Angelic girl! I shall never forget her! So happy as we might have been! I with an improving business, which might have been so much extended with the assistance her annuity of five hun-

dred pounds a-year would have afforded! She—— It was indeed a severe loss!”

Snubbs started at these words, and glanced at me one of his penetrating looks. “Which was the severe loss? My sister, or the annuity?” he inquired.

“Both,” I exclaimed, and I burst into a passion of sorrow. Snubbs wept with me, and we tenderly mingled our tears for the dear departed! and, when our sorrows had subsided, mixed a stiffish tumbler of punch a-piece, and lighting a fresh cigar, that smoked out, parted good friends.

I am thus particular in detailing this extraordinary scene, and playing so accurately my humble part of Boswell to *my* Johnson, Snubbs, because hereafter it is by no means improbable—quite the reverse—pretty certain, that these very minute traits of the character of so remarkable a person as JOHN SNUBBS will be greedily remembered, and devoured with avidity.

Accordingly, as was appointed, the next morning, as early as seven o'clock, a meeting and muster of my dear young friends took place at my house in the neighbourhood of Cornhill, where I had the honour of giving them a truly substantial English breakfast, by way of foundation for the arduous enjoyments of the day. At eight o'clock, all being ready, the hackney-coach No. 1299 was hired and driven up to my door. I was particular in taking the number, because it is quite remarkable that the driver was neither drunk nor abusive—charged only the regular fare, neither more nor less—and having to give change, what was more remarkable than all, all of it was good, pure current coin of the realm!—circumstances these so uncommon, that they seemed like happy omens of a day of unalloyed delight and pleasure.

This was all very well; but as a hackney-coach could not contain, when crammed close, more than six thin insides, what was to be done with eight of us, and two of that number particularly stout—namely, Snubbs and myself? Snubbs, always prompt and ready with expedients, soon settled that difficulty by bidding me

mount the coach-box, which I did, when, would you believe it? he put up the steps and banged to the coach-door with all the skill and off-handishness of a thorough-bred flunky; and then, to crown all, leapt up behind, caught at and didn't miss the leather straps that dangled there, and giving honest Jarvis the order of route—"Tower Wharf, Jarvey!"—off we rolled, and pitched, and rattled, in high hackney style! I must say that I watched the assumption of my friend Snubbs with considerable interest and admiration—his imitation of the nonchalance and easy illeness of the footman was so fine and true, as he stood bolt upright behind, swaying from side to side with the motion of the coach, with his cherry walking-stick elevated at an angle of forty-five degrees, all the while affecting the airs and graces of a plush-breechesed gentleman of the West End. It was a sight to see! The representation was perfection itself: the late Mr. Mathews could not have been truer to Nature. But Mr. Snubbs, while he is an inimitable humorist, is also a close observer of men and manners, which accounts for the same. When we arrived at St. Magnus' church, Snubbs dropped from behind with all the agility of a harlequin, let down the steps, and holding up his arm to support the ladies, finished his impersonation of the footman with all the gravity in the world, and the greatest truth to fashionable nature. Though I sometimes find something to censure in Snubbs, it is, and I do not hesitate to confess it, an honour to know him! It is proper to say that he made us all very merry; and even Jones, who is, in general, jealous of superior merit, laughed extremely well upon this occasion. As for the porter at the wharf-gate, he stared with all his eyes when he saw the inferred footman out of livery, after putting up the steps, put the ladies' arms under his, and walk off with them! "Well, if ever I saw anything like that!" exclaimed the Cerberus;—"I could have taken my halfadavy that he was a regular Johnny, and could have guessed what was his board-wages! Well, there's no knowing a man from

his master now, times are so altered!" Snubbs enjoyed his perplexity very much, and deservedly.

In a few moments our party were safely got on board the *Pearl* steamer, a nice-looking boat, with a good reputation, and just on the point of sailing, or, rather, steaming away for Gravesend. My young friends, as usual, required a little of my guidance, for they were about to take their seats in the fore part of the vessel, and nothing than that can be more decidedly ungentle—in fact, low. I put them right by remarking that "The afterpart of a steamer is where the aristocracy associate."

To turn to graver matters. I could not but observe a particular uneasiness, a nervousness in Jones, as soon as he set foot on board. He fidgetted, and shifted about, and could settle nowhere. He was standing immediately over the engine—the last place in the world where a man with his apparent nerves should have got—when, the steam being set on, the monstrous machinery gave a plunge like twenty elephants leaping down a precipice; and the *Pearl* seemed as though it would go where pearls come from, under the stupendous pressure of its ninety-horse-power engine. Jones, startled and terrified, leaped from the spot as though he had been shot, and scuttled off as fast and as far as his legs could carry him—to the extreme stern-end of the vessel! I wondered so much what was the matter with him, that I followed him, and found him—doing what?—holding tight by the wheel!

"What ails you, Jones?" I inquired, with concern. "Good heavens! you look as white as your ducks."

"Oh, nothing," answered he, shaking all the while from head to foot, "only a sort of—I really think that one of the eggs I took at breakfast was not well boiled, I do feel so uncommonly uncommon!"

"Jones," said I, impressively, "don't attempt to deceive me! The fact is—and I read it in your face as legibly as I can read anything in the *Times*—you are in fear for your personal safety! That is the hard-boiled egg which disagrees with you."

"Well," said he, humbly and imploringly, "don't tell *that* Snubbs, and I will freely confess to you, as a friend, that the novelty of the scene; the mighty waters under us; the forest of masts above us; the commercial greatness of my country; the roar of the steam-engine; the volumes of smoke and the sparks of fire from the chimney; the sight of the great guns at the Tower, which might go off by accident, you know; and the excessive quantity of gin-punch which I last night indulged in at our club, do make me, I allow, a little I-don't-know-how-ish: this is so different, you see, to going to Richmond by water—a'n't it now, to speak candidly?" (I confessed that it was.) "I shall get over these little impressions presently, and be as brave as a lion!" ["A *white* lion," thinks I to myself.] "Now, don't tell Snubbs," he continued, "or I shall never hear the last of it! Nor Mrs. Jones—pray don't, Twaddle, there's a dear, kind, considerate, beloved friend!"

I was satisfied, rather than not, at finding that Jones really stood in awe of Snubbs—(so often as he had said that "He didn't care a fig for him—not he!")—because he bore me out in the same reverential fear. As for telling Mrs. Jones that the husband of her bosom was subject to a sort of timidity, far be it from me! It might have made her unhappy for life: for women, I observe, never forget, if they forgive, anything like an exhibition of cowardice in the opposite sex.

At that moment, all being ready for starting, the fifty horses gave a more violent plunge; the roaring chimney threw out sparks of fire and volumes of smoke enough to daunt a Nelson, much more a Jones; the hawsers were thrown off; the gangways drawn ashore, and away went the *Pearl* like an arrow! Poor Jones! I shall never forget him! He was in an agony of apprehension! He clung as tight as a trivet to the tiller, till the man at the wheel forced his hands away with a scowl and an oath! He then looked behind him, aghast, as it were, and beheld the Tower apparently running

one way and the steamer another; the rapidity with which we flew past all objects confused his sight and his senses; the enormous engine kept thump-thump-thumping as if it would knock everybody overboard; the smoke, blown astern by the wind, choked and blinded him; he got up—he sat down again, repeatedly;—at last he could stand it no longer: he jumped up—stared wildly about him—his senses reeled—his face turned whiter and whiter—his knees knocked—(and he is by nature a little knock-kneed)—he staggered along the deck to get somewhere, he did not care where—he saw the cabin-ladder—tumbled, more than walked down it, and, by a peculiar instinct, found that it was exactly where what he wanted was to be had—brandy! I followed him with all the tenderness of a tried friend, and persuaded him to take a glass, neat as imported. I never saw him so tractable! He listened to my persuasions patiently—got down a bumper of brandy as well as he could, for his hands trembled, his lips quivered, his teeth chattered, and his tongue seemed to have lost its toper-like expertness in giving a glass of liquor the usual somerset which expedites it down. It was surprising how soon the brandy revived him! He then, at my request, lay down all along upon the cabin-seat to compose himself. I felt his pulse—it grew firmer—the colour came slowly into his face again, and he was a new man! Then, and not till then, I left him, to look after the rest of my party.

“What *was* the matter with that gentleman?” asked twenty kindly-curious persons when I came upon deck.

“Oh,” I said, “he is subject to a vertiginous complaint—that’s all.”

“A what?” exclaimed several of the persons—“What’s that?”—and they looked in each other’s faces, and then in mine; but I was in no humour to explain—indeed, people should know these things for themselves. Very extraordinary!—not one of our party had observed poor Jones’s peculiar condition, which *was so much* the better for him. I found them all as

lively as shrimps before they know what getting into hot water is—all, excepting Mrs. Jones, who, like her husband, was rather qualmish, and asked me whether it was usual to be sea-sick in going to Gravesend?

Snubbs answered, "Yes, it is usual; and, indeed, it is expected of all landsmen and landswomen: but it is quite optional. By the bye, where's Jones all this while? Why, we must have left him behind us? Or else he is lost, stolen or strayed?"

I put on a white-lying face, and said he was, I believed, a little poorly in the after-cabin.

"The land lubber!" cried Snubbs; and he was preparing to start to "start" him: but I restrained his impetuous spirit. I could not help remarking that while Miss Fanny Snubbs immediately rose up to go and see whether he was ill, and she could comfort him, or render him any assistance, Mrs. Jones, on the contrary, sat stock still as a stone! How strange—how inexplicable is human affection! That wicked wit, Snubbs, read in my face, notwithstanding it lied so respectably, that there was something very unusual in Jones's long absence, and down he darted to the cabin. Fortunately, the brandy had, by this time, done its duty—Jones was perfectly recovered, and set up as pert as a pearmonger! There was, to be sure, a certain "interesting paleness" in his face, as my Lord Byron says; but his trepidation was clean gone, or else he had the art to conceal it from Snubbs, from whom he knew he should meet with no mercy. Snubbs scrutinized him very carefully, and looked not a little disappointed when he saw that all was in some sort right with poor Jones, except his pallid look.

"What makes you look so pale, Jones?" he inquired.

"Eh? pale? Oh, ah, I know—that old sailor on the Wharf with no legs—carried away by a chain-shot, and never returned—so horrid, you know—my antipathy—always makes me pale to see a man without legs—it must be so inconvenient—eh?" And Jones winked at me to say nothing; and accordingly, as Snubbs could

not laugh at him, he laughed with him. We then walked up to the deck; and though Jones seemed to feel a slight return of his nervousness, it soon wore off, and he faced the funnel, even stood for a minute over the engine, and looked down upon its mighty legs and arms, kicking and sprawling and tossing about, with something like a steady set of nerves. Snubbs, I could perceive, watched him; but though he suspected a rat, he could not discern where it was, nor of what colour it was.

We were by this time far down the Pool. It is a perplexing passage, and not very picturesque; and yet there is something extremely interesting—nay, almost sublime, in that narrow sea! I felt it was so—for it inspired me. “Commerce,” I exclaimed, “may here proudly hold up her head, and cry, ‘See what I have done for mankind! Behold these navies, of my creating; this busy industry, which I direct; these shores, spread with merchandize; these piles of buildings, costly, if not handsome; this wealth of all the world gathered here in huge heaps, to be spread abroad again, and return, and re-return’”—[“Not an allowable duplication of syllables, according to Lindley Murray,” cried Snubbs]—“To return, then,” I resumed, “in some other form, the work of ingenious human hands, and, still accumulating, stands a pyramid of diamond, not stone, and makes our Thames a more abundant Nile, its gravel gold—”

“There you are dabbling among the gold again, Twaddle!” cried Snubbs, who had, as I thought, been listening admiringly; but you never can depend upon his temper. Poets are, I believe, the most jealous of geniuses; and they cannot help it. Now Jones, I will say that for him, in a better spirit, hung with evident rapture on what I said—forgot himself, and thought only of the glory of his country, and of me, its inadequate apostrophizer. Snubbs, too, was himself silent, but thoughtful, for some time after; and I have no doubt of a sonnet forthcoming some day, as the result of his private meditations. At that moment, by a curious coincidence, a remarkable, pale, thin young gentleman

—quite an oddity in his dress and the sum total of his appearance—passed by us with an annual in his hand, his forefinger between the gilt leaves. He bowed to Snubbs, and Snubbs dittoed to him.

“Who is that?” we all asked.

“Oh, a sonneteer of my acquaintance,” said Snubbs.

Mrs. Jones, who had been looking another way, turned round, exclaiming, “A sonneteer!—La, what’s that?—How I should like to see a sonneteer!” she continued, as *naively* and great-girlishly as though she was still in the “La, Pa!” period of sweet female fifteen. I think Mrs. Jones affects this simplicity; but I may be wrong. I showed her the sonneteer, and described him to her—as a poet: she seemed quite disappointed! There appeared to her to be no difference between Mr. Jones and a poet—except that Jones had the cleanest waistcoat of the two, and had combed his hair that morning, and brushed his hat.

By this time we were off Greenwich Hospital; and here again Mrs. Jones was disappointed. She had imagined, simple soul! that all “the salt-water *wette-runs*” as a snug, little, compact, Cheapside tradesman on the right called them) were uniformly without legs and arms, and indebted to the ship-carpenter and the timber-merchant for their powers of locomotion, &c.! She was quite taken aback to see some of the ugly old hulks, who were laid up in ordinary, quite capable of “*sarving* a friend” (out) and a foe “too besides,” if need were. As we were taking in passengers at the time, I bade her pay particular attention to the naval specimens she saw lining the shore—some smoking, some joking, and some poking their sticks between the stones, for want of something better to amuse them. Bless the old boys! And may a generous nation never play the part of a stingy steward in serving out the slops to them!—The old Cheapsider joined-in in explaining these nautical affairs to Mrs. Jones, and, if he could, he would have been eloquent, for he began to talk of “Nelson, Howe, and Jarvis;” but he broke down smack in an apostrophe

to the glories of Old England, and "fumbled for his brains." However, he was a sociable old fellow enough, and in a short time became quite one of us. He was going to Gravesend, he told us, because he had "a darter" there.

"You seem to enjoy a bad state of health, Sir?" said Snubbs to the Cit, with one of his grins upon his face.

"Why, yes, Sir, I am sorry to say that I do," answered old Philpott.

"Ah, exactly so," said Snubbs, looking in his face, which was as yellow as if he had been fed upon oil-cake. "I see what is the matter with you. A box of antibilious pills would——"

"No, Sir," said the old boy, "I don't think I am at all *antibilious*!"

"You seem to know!" said Snubbs; and he turned away to have his laugh out. Just at this moment I witnessed a remarkable illustration of the truth of the old proverb—"A guilty conscience needs no accuser." Two persons had made themselves particularly obnoxious by the airs and graces they affected. You would have thought them, at least, a couple of foolish, foppish young cadets of the Hon. E. I. C. S., to look at them—they so strutted and paraded! As we rounded Woolwich Point two guns were fired close together from the shore. "Slap! Bang!" cried Snubbs, alluding, of course, to the separate reports of the guns. The two strutting persons, taking his exclamation in quite another signification, started, turned round upon him, looked at him as though they meant to eat him, coughed, coloured up, and suddenly strode away. "So ho!" cried Snubbs, in sportsman-like style, "So ho! A find! Twaddle, look! Don't you know 'em?" I declined that honour. "Why," he continued, "they're the two first waiters of the Boiled Beef-house in the Old Bailey. So ho! Hark forward! Yoicks! So! Stole away!" I looked as he directed, and the force of Snubbs's just discrimination of character flashed conviction upon my mind! I knew *them* sure enough! It was Sam and Tom, the principal

waiters at the house alluded to: Sam, who always forgets your fourpence change, because he "Thought he had given it you!" and Tom, who always charges you sixpence too much, because he "Thought you took tart!" Their indulgence in these trips of pleasure may perhaps account for their slips of memory. However, they behaved themselves modestly after this rencontre.

We were now off Woolwich Warren. "Pray, Sir," said the twenty-thousand-pounder to Snubbs, "as you seem to be a very well-informed young man, what is a warren?"

"Why," said Snubbs, "I believe it is a place appropriated to, rockets, rabbits, and Royal Artillerymen." The old gentleman bowed: and Snubbs, rolling his tongue round, went on with his roguceries; but he very soon found out that he had got hold of what is fashionably called a bore, and a very dull one.

As we progressed along, the simple old fellow, glancing out of the cabin-window, observed that a part of the crew were employed in bringing up the ashes in baskets from the regions below, and throwing them overboard. A long black line of refuse marked our good ship's way among the briny waters. "That must half p'ison the white-bait!" remarked the worthy man; and he seemed to feel a concern highly becoming, I must say, in a citizen of London (which is tantamount to being a citizen of the world) for the health and well-being of those interesting inhabitants of the watery world. "Lord love you, Sir, no," said a seafaring man, one of the voyagers, who had promiscuously overheard the remark, "it don't p'ison 'em, poor things; but, I believe, it doesn't do 'em not no good at all: 'cause, you see, it drops into their eyes, which are rather delicate, and sets 'em a winking, which, in course, gives 'em cold, and that gives 'em the hopthalmy, you know, so that they can't very well see what they're about, and where they're a-going to. And that's one reason why shrimps is cotched hereabouts at the rate of thrippence a pint!"

I never went on board a steamer but I observed that there was always a certain sort and set of people who seemed to think of nothing but dancing: while on the other hand there were others who gave up their whole souls to eating and drinking. The heels of the dancing persons were as restless as ever upon this occasion; and though it was unusual to dance during the voyage out, dance they would, and did. In no time at all *pardners* as they called them, were selected, and off they went to the old tune of "Sir Roger de Coverley." From country dances the transition is now easy to waltzes; and from these again to *quodreels*, as they were called. Jones, during this interregnum, was "himself again;" for if there is anything in which he excels it is in "tripping it lightly as you go." Tomlins also took part in these hilarities; while Wilson looked on and enjoyed the scene. Snubbs, too, went down the first dance; but, being "fat, and scant of breath," he stood out when waltzes were called. As for Fanny, delightful girl! she was the life and soul of the affair, as usual; and several young gentlemen voyagers were, I observed, with pleasure, competitors for her fair hand. Mrs. Jones positively refused to join the dance—and why?—"Because she feared that dancing might capsize the ship!"

The ball was kept up with spirit, and Time danced too. The sky had some minutes before grown overcast, and now the thunder muttered up above, the lightning glittered, and the rain came drop, drop, drop, as if the drops were being counted out. As a severe storm was evidently brewing, the voyagers retired one after another into the cabins. There were not many on board, so that there was room for all. The rain now came down in cloudsful—the storm grew terrific—the timid quaked—Jones was again a little nervous, but it gave way under proper treatment and the old remedy—"Brandy and water, cold, without." The storm became darker and darker—the company sat silent and gloomy. In such emergencies there is always some superior

spirit that rises superior to the storms of Fate ; and, accordingly, who but Tomkins suddenly broke the awful silence by calling out "Order for a song!" It was electric, and operated like a reprieve. The presumption of that Jones is wonderful! He immediately called himself to the chair—he! If it had been Snubbs or myself who had been solicited to take upon either of us the solemn responsibilities of such a station, we might have been excused ; but Jones to thrust himself forward in such a forward way! It was highly unbecoming ; and I shall always think it so. However, Tomkins was as good as his word, for he immediately struck up "*Oh, no, we never mention her ;*" which was as promptly followed up by a brother-voyager with "*Oh, yes, we often talk about him,*" being, as I supposed, a sort of sequel to the other. The ice once broken in, song followed song in rapid succession.

A little, whipper-snapper of a fellow, with an impediment in his nose, and a voice like a penny-whistle, then struck up "*O'er Nelson's tomb,*" which set Snubbs, who is always too ready with his derision, laughing like mad. After him, up started a little man with a double squint, who had been sitting very quietly in a corner, and looking as if he could see into all the other corners at once ; he was big with song ; and after a jeering "*Hear ! hear !*" from that unfeeling Snubbs, and a call to order from Jones in the chair, (Heaven save the mark !) the squinting gentleman indulged us with

"Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will *pledge* with mine!"

"You'll do *what* with them?" demanded Snubbs, in his sarcastic manner, which set all the convivial cabin in a roar.

There was no end to the little fellows, for after the last little fellow had exhausted himself, the company was much amused by another Lilliputian leaping on the table to give them a recitation from "*King John.*" The part he selected for *début* was Falconbridge. Our heroic representative of that stalwart and generous sol-

dier was four feet and a little bit over in height, with a pair of legs like an old-fashioned pair of bow-legged sugar-tongs, or the crooked claws of a lobster. However, he acquitted himself very respectably—save that he did not mind his stops, and was indifferent where he placed his h's—but I must say that if he omitted them at the beginning of such words as "hide" and "have," he gave them you before others not so well entitled to them, and was particularly emphatic in the line

"Has great *Hal*cides shows upon *han* *hass*!"

So that you had them, after all, though not where you would have preferred them. He went on very well, however, till he came to that unfortunate speech for him—

"————— Good Mother,
To whom am I beholden for these limbs?
Sir Robert never help to make this leg!"

When, suiting the action to the word, the little man smote his thigh; it was too much for Snubbs—he could not contain his humour; and it seemed, indeed, too much for the rest of the company, for an universal titter ran round. Snubbs had, however, the decency, this time, to take himself away; and as he rushed out of the cabin, he pulled me out with him. On the deck his laughter exploded harmlessly, and he then indulged me with a few moral reflections.

"It is very odd, Twaddle," said he, "that if a man has some glaring defect of person which he should rather seek to conceal than make public, his folly prompts him to show it up—exhibit it—and invite the public gaze! If a man is knock-knee'd, he is sure to take to the stage! If he has a lisp, or an impediment of speech, he gets as soon as he can into a pulpit! If he squints he is eternally having his portrait painted! If he is bow-legged, he wears tight pantaloons, when loose trowsers would hide his deformity! If he is wanting in nose, he is sure to wear a showy pair of spectacles, which draw your attention to the deficiency. If

he has an abundance of nose, he is always either giving it snuff, or making use of it in some noisy way or other, to draw your notice noseward. I remember often meeting a young man in the theatres who had no bridge to his nose; it is very odd, but he always sat sideways on his seat, so that you could not help observing his deformity!"

What odd characters one may meet with even on board a Gravesend steamer! There was one old gentleman who particularly attracted my attention, from the station he had taken on board: for raining as it was, his umbrella up, he had seated himself dangerously, I should say, on "the very head and front" of the boat's figure-head; and when I inquired into his whim for selecting that perilous post, he answered me, impatiently, and rapidly, "Sir, I make it a rule never to lose a moment of time. Time is life, Sir; if you want to make the most of life, make the most of time; never lose a moment! I never do. At home, I'm always the first in bed, and first up. Abroad I always get first into a theatre, and first out of it. In a steam-boat, I'm first on board, and first ashore. If it was to catch fire, I should be overboard first, and picked up first. If it doesn't catch fire, that's a mercy; or perhaps it's too expensive to burn a boat a day? If we get to the end of our trip, as I'm first man at the fore, I'm first at Gravesend! Never lose time! Time's precious! I speak words of four-syllables in half the time *you* would words of two—quick—sharp—short—speak short-hand! No drawl—never lose time! Time's money—save it! I do! Always do two things at once! I do! Shave and give orders for dinner—shave and scold the children—shave and turn the cat out! Breakfast and hear Jack's lesson for the day—read paper—write letters—cast up accounts, yesterday's—pull on right boot between cups first and second—left boot between cups third and fourth—crack an egg and break Jack's head for dunce at once! First up from table always! Dinner, tea, supper, the same! Always save time, because it's the

way to keep time! Always first in everything! When I was a boy at school always cried 'I'm first!' Now I'm first man—will be first—must be first, because I don't lose time! If Time's out in his reckoning, I'll tell him what's o'clock! Live at No. 1! Am No. 1! Take great care of No. 1! Eh? Um?"

We now returned to the cabin. The "conwiwiality," as the old citizen termed it, had not at all slackened or abated by our temporary absence. I did—I confess it—expect that, during our vacation, Jones would have proposed our healths; but he was, I fear, too jealous to be so generous. No matter. When we entered, a sentimental young fellow was warbling the new song of—

"We met—'twas in the Pump—'twas in the Pump—the Pump-room, Bath;"

which, as it was softly pathetic, was listened to with the greatest respect; and was followed up by a friend of his with a sort of sequel—

"We Parted—about half-past nine;"

also very pathetic, and tear-drawing. That done, an asthmatical old beau whistled out, as well as he could, the particularly tender ballad—

*"She lived—I've heard—at No. 10;
He lodged at the next door;"*

which was succeeded, very coincidentally, by—

*"Oh, yes, I now remember her!
Her name, I think, was Jones?"*

—at which Mrs. Jones coloured up like scarlet, naturally enough supposing that she was the identical person included; but I explained away her misapprehension, and set her sensitive mind at ease. Who, then, but Tomlins volunteered to sing—

"I beg you wouldn't mention it;"

which, I must do him the justice to say, drew a tear from every eye, and a handkerchief from every pocket, except that hard-hearted fellow Snubbs; he did nothing but quiz poor Tomlins. A superfine young person, with

his hair parted down the centre in the split-herring and dried-salmon fashion, then favoured us again with that tender ballad—

"Oh, no! we never mention her."

"Spoke! spoke!" cried several voices, but the objection was overruled. His voice went for nothing, but I was quite struck with the elegance of his pronunciation, it was so unlike that of the other singers present, and was so vast an improvement, indeed, upon the general run of common vulgarities. One couplet particularly pleased me for the elaborate beauty of its delivery:—

*"They tell me she is happy ne-ow,
The ge-ayest of the ge-ay!"—*

an elegance not, however, I regret to say, appreciated by the very vulgar persons present. Snubbs being himself called upon for a song, as if in contempt of the tender emotions which the last song had awakened in every bosom, started off with a coarse set of broad-comedy verses, beginning—

*"He tweak'd, and I tweak'd,
But he'd the tenderest nose,"*

which set all the sentimentality present to flight.

A lady then volunteered a song, but "wished to know if there was never a *piany* on board, that she might accompany herself?" The steward being called in, and asked whether he had a piano on board, answered—"No—quite the reverse;" so that the lady could not accompany herself, which everybody regretted, as everybody expected it would have been so very delightful. One young gentleman was gallant enough, however, to offer to accompany her on a pocket-comb—an instrument of music I remember to have once heard played, in the absence of flute and fiddle, in a Christmas party in humble life, and it really made a not-unpleasant droning sound, not much unlike the humming of a bee in a bottle. The comb being first covered with paper, is placed tight against the teeth: the small-tooth professor then hums "Nancy Dawson," or "Sir Roger de Coverley," softly, with regular breath, and though it

sets your teeth on edge to hear it, it at the same time sets the feet of the dancers going, which is as much as can be expected. To return from this scientific digression. Another young person offered a jew's-harp accompaniment; and Jones bitterly regretted that he had not brought his ivory flute with additional keys with him; but he offered to whistle a second to the lady's first, which was not accepted. Half-an-hour having been expended in all manner of useless expedients, the lady, after much pressing and entreating, at length struck up—

"She started from the Bull and Mouth,"

an entirely new song. If you could but have heard her! But you have perhaps heard the "Iö Pæan" of the peacock at the New River Head?—Everybody, I could very well see, was most provokingly disappointed.

"Well," said Snubbs to me in a whisper, when she had got through the first verse, and was hemming up the second—"Well, I must say that the lady certainly wants something or somebody to accompany her, but I beg leave to remark that I'm not going her way;" and out of the cabin he darted. After all, I don't know whether it was not a treat to hear so bad a singer. I took the earliest decent opportunity of joining Snubbs, who candidly acknowledged that he could stand the rain, but not the singing.

"Well," said he, "I have heard to-day several of your spick-and-span new fashionable lyrics; and I must say that no songs can be more subversive of sentiment and suggestive of fun. They seem to be all of the same kidney for measure, for manner, and for matter. It is all meeting or parting! When these passionate persons meet, they seem to me to meet to no purpose: when they part I am glad that they are gone—he to his stay-shop or shop-board, she to her getting up of small linen or bonnet-making. You have a taste for these modern songs I know, Twaddle, though I am sure you do not understand them. I don't. I always read one of your modish songs upwards, beginning at the last *line* and going up to the top: that way I do sometimes

make out what the poet is driving at. I have no patience with them, Twaddle!"

At this critical moment in our melodious affairs the seaman-like-looking person—who had been quietly rolling his quid from cheek to cheek, and twirling his thumbs, in a corner, as the jocund strains went on—startled the company by suddenly striking up a sea-song, with a voice somewhere between a boatswain's bellowing and a storm's piping-up all hands. Everybody shrunk from anything like contact with the vulgarity of the selection and the seventy-four power of the lungs of the singer: the ladies put their delicate white hands to their delicate white ears: the gentlemen looked as if they wondered at his rude assurance. Unconscious of the solecism, unabashed by the wet blanket the company threw upon his "endeavours to please," the seaman-like person persevered: and when he came to the end of the first verse, called "Chorus, gemmen!" as bold as brass, to which appeal for professional assistance nobody responded, for everybody seemed too much shocked and annoyed. On he went without it, therefore, with his

"For *Polls* too-oo ted-en-der hear-ar-ar-
ted,
To slight a shi-i-ip-wreck'd Tar."

They couldn't put him down by their coughing, their scuffling of feet, their whistling, their whispering, nor their exclamations of "Low!" "Vulgar!" "Intolerable!" "Horrid!" "What a bore!" &c., &c. "*Ojeous* crectur!" cried the lady who wanted the piano, in a pianissimo voice. "Chorus!" howled the sea-monster as he finished verse the second; but there was no response. At last that Snubbs, out of his provoking pity, took compassion on the obstreperous person, and joined in with him: upon which Jones followed Snubbs in the superfluous condescension; and then Tomlins, he must take up the burden; and as we were all of one party, I did not like to see the dead set made at the poor man, and so I chimed in too. The company, however, did not go with us, and knocked down the song before it was half finished, which only created the

more delay, for the seaman-like person was not to be silenced till he had had his song out, as well as the rest.

Snubbs now became almost unbearably humoursome : for I regret to say that, like Jones, he had indulged somewhat too much in brandy, watered, but weakly. A very obliging young man had no sooner struck up, without being asked for it,

*"Gin a body meet a body
Coming through the rye,"*

than Snubbs rudely interrupted him by chiming in with this most improper paraphrase :

*"If an individual meet an individual
Wriggling all awry!"*

Which, of course, stirred up all that was ludicrous in the company, and totally prevented the diffident young person from persevering in his song. So some young genius is sometimes put down by some vociferous Snubbs, and "dies and makes no sign" of "the broke heart of the Nightingale, o'ercome in music." Another young person, with more confidence, for he was six feet high and looked as if he could fight "a few," then gave us

"There's nae luck about the house,"

which Snubbs had the decency to give ear to attentively till the couplet came

*"There's little pleasure in the house
When our gude man's awa' ;"*

when, careless of his superior powers, he broke into the ring again by substituting the line—

"There's little jocundity on the premises!"

Did you ever hear anything so monstrous?—It was all of no use calling him to order—he was all the worse for the interruption, like an airing shirt on fire, when you try to put it out with a squirt, he flared up all the more. But there is a grace in Snubbs when he is at the worst; you can't give him up—you are never long ashamed of him.

To restore the good-humour of all, he related a pleasant story of a French friend of his, who so much admired the good old ballad, "*My Friend and Pitcher*,"

that he did nothing from morning till night but go about the house and about the streets singing "My Friend and *Pisher*!" Those agreeable concomitants haunted him everywhere. He put on his nightcap to the song—he fell asleep humming it like a bee—he waked singing it like a lark—he pulled off his nightcap to the same tune—it haunted him everywhere: even when he went to confession, it was not till he had scraped his shoes at the chapel-door that he could get rid of his "Friend and *Pisher*." One word only in the simple song perplexed him. Vulgar persons call meat which is half-roasted *rare*, for *raw*; Monsieur had heard it so called, and hence his difficulty as to the right understanding of the text—

"My Friend so *rare*," &c.

"Oui—yes! dam good!" said he. "But vat does the poet say by *rare*? Eh, Monsieur *Snubb*?" "*Rare*?"—answered Snubbs, (who was perhaps thinking of his steak at the time, which was not done enough)—"*Rare*?—underdone, to be sure, *mon ami*!" In a few days the Frenchman had somehow substituted the interpretation for the original, and you heard him going about the house, and everywhere, all day singing

"My Friend so *underdone*,
My Girl so fair,"

to the very great amusement of "the natives." Snubbs told the story capitally, and it told, as the late humourous Mr. Hood would say.

A wee, little man then favoured the meeting by singing "*The Storm*" with a small voice which you might have put in your waistcoat-pocket. Snubbs whispered to me that his puny pipe suggested nothing so much to him as a penny-whistle in a state of great excitement. After him, the Hebrew-visaged young man sang "*The Teath of Abercromby*" in professed "imitation of Praham." "In imitation of *Pra'am*?" cried Snubbs, contemptuously punning on the word *praam*, (which is, I believe, the name of a good-sized sort of Dutch vessel)—

"Say, rather, 'in imitation of *butter-boat*!" The Hebrew-visaged young man looked at Snubbs as though he could have eaten him! If he had attempted it, I know what unforbidden meat Snubbs would have sworn he was, and so have saved his bacon by a subterfuge. Then a droll little dog sang one of the comicalities of that Dibdin of the dry land of Cockneydom, Tom Hudson—a wag of undeniable genius in song-caricature, and a worthy, modest man withal. Sings at *our* Ward dinners, and at *our* Hall banquets always!

All being harmony, and Mr. Snubbs being, as he was, first fiddle, as he deserved to be, he seized the golden opportunity to propose "The health of Mr. Jones!" The toast being honoured, Mr. Jones was called upon to rise and return thanks, upon which a very remarkable circumstance occurred. *We*, of course, expected *our* Jones to rise—nothing less—when, to our great astonishment, just nineteen men and a boy—all Joneses—rose as one Jones to express their thanks for the honour done, &c.! The coincidence gave rise to a great amount of merriment. Snubbs then pointed out the person meant—Mr. Chairman Jones—and order was immediately restored. Mr. Jones, far-gone as he was, made a short reply—tried to lay his hand on his heart, missed it, but got as far as his waistcoat pocket—and tried very hard to get out a word of four syllables, but kept two back for another occasion, and then sat down by proposing the health of Mr. Snubbs in return. Toast honoured by all the company save six persons, who sat as still as mice! What could be the reason? I, at first, thought it was disaffection to my friend Snubbs; but the real reason was soon made manifest. Mr. Snubbs being called upon by the Chair to be thankful, up started the whole of these six persons, all Snubbses! But when *the* Snubbs—*our* Snubbs—rose, with all the dignity of genius, the mistaken men speedily resumed their seats, and, with a proper modesty, themselves. Snubbs was very happy in his reply, and "kept the table in a *roar*" at the double coincidence: and harmony having

by this time returned, "asked leave to sit again." "Or-or-der!" cried Mr. Jones as well as he could speak—unhappy man! Mrs. Jones looked then what she intended to say at night when she got him home.

It served Snubbs very right—he was now knocked down for a song; and as the demand came from one of the persons he had so severely suppressed, with that discernment with which a man of observation is gifted, I saw, at a glance, into the motive of the call. He intended retaliation, in his turn, upon Snubbs; but Snubbs's lucky genius, I was sure, would defeat the plot. He promptly replied, that he would not only sing, but, what was more, he would, impromptu, write a song for the occasion. ("Hear! Hear!") He then coolly lit his cigar, called for writing materials, which were brought, and he immediately began the composition. His presence of mind was wonderful! It was quite a picture to see "the poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling" over the sheet of foolscap; and as, perhaps, none of the unlettered persons present had ever set eyes upon a poet in the moment of inspiration, there was evidently an uncommon curiosity manifested on all sides to see how poetry was made. A buzz circulated round the cabin, and underhanded whispers were heard of "Who is he?" "Why, Snubbs!" "Which Snubbs?" "Snubbs the poet!" "What, that Snubbs who writes for the *Penny Grasshopper, or Moorfield's Lounger*?" "No—that Snubbs is only a versifier: he's no poet!" "Well, then, you must mean that John Snubbs who wrote the 'Tears of Sensibility' in the *Cripplegate Crocodile*?" "Exactly! The same!" "Is it possible?" "Well, then, I'm sure!" "Who'd have thought it!" "I never saw a poet afore! Don't see much difference now—nothing very pekooliar!" "I'm disapp'inted!" whispered a very sentimental-looking young man—a haberdasher, I heard—"I expected to see a pale, pensive, interesting person, with his hair uncombed, dishevelled, wild, with a best white cambric handkerchief in his hand; and here! he does nothing but laugh, and smoke,

and drink, and sing! I'm disapp'inted! My previous ideas ain't come up to at all! Where's his nightcap, like Thomson before Thomson's Seasons?—and his unbuttoned shirt, like Prior in the frontispiece? *He's* got his waistcoat buttoned all the way up! I'm disapp'inted I tell you!"—were the significant sentences I overheard. But the buzz (which I could see Snubbs enjoyed *sub rosa*) was soon hushed, and the silence which followed was, if I may say so, awful! Every eye was fixed alternately upon now the poet, and now the paper! It was a trying time for all parties, but especially *our* party. I confess that I felt so deeply interested in the credit of my friend, that I trembled for him. The Muse was, however, very kind: he drew a bill at sight—it was accepted without hesitation. A quarter of an hour of most intense suspense had not elapsed when his pen was observed to strike a triumphant flourish at the bottom of the sheet. The song was done! Wonderful! I never witnessed such a sensation, except once at a ship-launch! This was as interesting quite: to be present at a song-launch, is not an everyday affair. "Order!" "Chair!" "Silence for Mr. Snubbs's song!" were riotously demanded. The excitement of the moment was intense: it seemed to sober Jones—it made me drunk. Snubbs then rose—a little fluttered and flushed, I thought; but it might be my anxiety which made me suspect an embarrassment quite foreign to his nature. He next deliberately laid down his cigar:—"Order!" He coughed, to clear his throat:—"Chair! chair!" Some one, perhaps too susceptible of the cold-giving influences of the weather, sneezed loudly: "Turn him out!" cried twenty persons unanimously. Snubbs then, with his sonorous tenor voice, sang as beautiful and original a song as I ever heard. It began, as well as I could catch the lines—

*"Blow, blow, thou Winter wind!
Thou art not so unkind," &c. &c.*

The effect was electric—the applause unbounded—I never heard greater honours paid to a song and a singer

in my life!—He was unanimously encored, and he sang it better and better. I never—did I?—no, I never did hear such thunders of applause as followed each verse!—It was encouraging—it was overwhelming! What a tribute to genius! Who says it is not acknowledged?—I was proud of *my* friend—we were all proud of *our* friend!

After the excitement had a little subsided, I humbly begged the favour of a copy of the immortal verses. “No,” said Snubbs, “as nobody knows them—nobody shall!” I thought this was a little ungracious; but men of genius are so very capricious! Applause and brandy and water are very strong stimulants to the natural excitability and eccentricity of their minds, and I pardoned his brusqueness. A gratifying compliment was then paid to his superior powers by the very person who had intended a revenge when he proposed him for a song: he rose, in honest approbation, now to “Propose his jolly good health, as an ornament to any society—from the Lumber Troopers to the Odd Fellows—and an honour to his country!” Toast drunk with three times three, and one more, upstanding, &c., with such warmth as must have made its happy, enviable object very comfortable in his feelings. How his sister exulted, silently, in the homage paid to him! Snubbs returned thanks in capital style, and made every man his friend. “The force of genius can no further go.”

While these exciting circumstances were going on below, all this while the storm continued above. It was unfortunate, for every one had doubtless promised themselves much pleasure in looking abroad from aboard upon what “old Philpott,” our city friend, called “the face of *Nater*.” As it was, we were compelled to look at home, and examine the face of Nixon or Dixon. However, what with spruce-beer, ginger-beer, and bottled beer, brandy and water hot and cold, cigars, songs, toasts, and sentiments, time passed agreeably enough, and we might have been, no doubt of it, much worse off. The day had not met our wishes; but who, as

Snubbs very properly said, can depend upon an English day?—Unfortunately, too, the sea rose, I will not say mountains high, but certainly Addle and Dowgate hills high, which made many of our fresh-water mariners uncommonly indisposed, though they all attributed their indisposition to the cigars, which were not very good; and I observed, with lively concern, many of our gallant ship's company drop as dead as herrings one after the other. As all *our* party bore up very well—even Jones himself, who, primed with brandy, was now as bold as brass—we stood our ground, let the storm rage on, and sustained ourselves under the unavoidable inconveniences of bad tobacco and worse ventilation. We made up our minds to “support the Chair;” and I must say that that was by no means a work of supererogation—for the chair, or Jones, was unusually unsteady. During the last hour I noticed how often he had filled and emptied his glass. At first, I thought that he was only warding off a fresh attack of his old complaint, but observing that his face became flushed instead of pale, I was curious to inquire into his goings on; and when his health was proposed in his absence, I seized the occasion privately to express my unfeigned sorrow at the change which I observed in his habits—for by that time he was undoubtedly fuddled.

“My dear friend Twaddle,” said Jones—and he sighed and hiccupped at the same time—“I’m a disappointed man; and so, the long and the short of it is—I’ve taken to drinking!”

I was shocked to hear his confession. Snubbs, I observed, heard it too, and a sardonic grin stole over his expressive face. I know not in how much Mr. Jones is disappointed: he did expect, I believe, when he married Miss Simpson, that his father-in-law would have shook down a little of his dust; but the old boy, who is fond of his Four per Cents., very candidly said, on Jones’s marriage-day, “Not a dump till I die, Jack!” which is, perhaps, the origin of his disappointment. Mrs. Jones herself is much changed since her marriage,

which adds something to his misfortunes. Whatever it is, Jones, who is extremely susceptible of outward impressions, takes something or other very much to heart, and is, compared with what he was, an altered man—no fun—no flute—no nothing: all is comparatively taken clean out of him! At luncheon time he could not eat a bit; but Snubbs, on the contrary, I never saw him play his knife and fork to such a tune!—his appetite had a Court-of-Aldermen power! Unluckily for Jones, he noticed it.

“Why, Snubbs,” he cried, “you *peck* inordinately!”

“Perhaps I do,” said Snubbs, grinning; “*I’m* a disappointed man, and *I’ve* taken to *eating*!”

If you could but have seen Jones’s face!—I saw that his spirit—aggravated by brandy and water—was beginning to get up, so I forced him from the bar, where he was taking a thirteenth “go” of “cold without,” to look at Tilbury Fort, which, at that moment, was hardly more combustible and warlike than Jones: when, fortunately for both parties, and for all parties, just as we were beginning to discover that we were being stewed alive down below, we were told that we were at Gravesend! Nothing could exceed the joy of all on board at this news. All persons concerned were immediately on deck—the pipe was put down half smoked—the song ceased, unfinished—the toast, ready prepared, was left, to be served up, perhaps, as cold toast—the Chairman did not “return thanks for the honour done him in his absence”—he never heard, more’s the pity, that “he was an honour to his country”—Jones!—“of all men else,” Jones! All that was now thought about was how safely to get upon dry land in a still severe shower. This done, we forgot and forgave all the perils of the deep—all “the songs, toasts, and sentiments” which had beguiled our weary, dreary way.

The pier at Gravesend is a handsome edifice—light, though heavy—dry, though water-washed—and an ornament to the town. The landing of passengers is now as safe and easy as stepping up stairs in your own house.

the terrors of the scene are gone; and, as Snubbs said, the Coroner is not now obliged to live in the neighbourhood, and be at hand to sit upon the poor people who used to be picked up every day drowned under the old system of things; and jury-men can consequently dine. Now, only mark the inconsistency of Jones; would it be believed that Jones—he who looked as if his soul was parting from his body this morning when the steamer suddenly shook off from the Tower “like a dew-drop from a lion’s mane,”—he who clung to the “earth, earthy” with a tenacity which beat bird-lime hollow—would it be credited that, when he saw how easily and safely the landing was now managed, he had the shameful temerity to regret the perfect security of the new pier and its superior accommodations! He had heard of the horrors of landing at Gravesend before the pier was built—the fearful competition between rival watermen, upon the arrival of a boat-load of citizens, as to who should land them or drown them—as it happened;—he had heard of wherries being swamped—of people being blackguarded, hustled, and ill-used—of the wear, and “tare, and tret” of the garments of those who, after suffering a water-side martyrdom, got, as much of them as was left, upon dry land; and he regretted that these evils were no longer in the land of the living!—*he!* “It must have been fine fun,” he said, “to have seen a disembarkation in those days, when a London citizen and his amiable wife and family went a-pleasuring to Gravesend: the worthy Mr. Lubin Log pulled, and pulled to pieces, into one boat, Mrs. Log, all rumpled and torn, and crying a thousand murders, dragged into another; her six full-blown daughters dispersed into six several wherries, all ready to go down with carrying more passengers than the act of Parliament allowed; the little Lubin, in the hurry, and fright, and confusion, forgotten and left behind in the hoy, asleep among the boxes and bags to be kept till called for; the hamper, which they had brought with them for a camp dinner on Windmill-hill, purposely *pushed overboard*, and sunk as a speculation, to be fished

up again as soon as the coast was clear, &c., &c. This," he had the inhumanity to say, "must have been worth seeing. He was quite disappointed—no danger—no nothing—not even a handsome set of ankles to be seen accidentally—no lovely young lady in distress, to call up the gallantry of such a number of good-looking young gentlemen!" And so he went on; and I must say that, though Snubbs laughed at it, I was very much shocked. But this was not all. It was remarkable to see Jones, who, at starting, shrunk into himself and into nothing at the violent movements of the steam-machinery, now standing, straddle-legged, in the most daring manner, right over the paddle-box, enveloped in steam and smoke—careless of danger—courting it!—I have made up my mind as to Jones. He is a little swaggerer—neither more nor less! and in one of those moments of mutual confidence, when a friend may take that liberty with a friend, I shall tell him so.

We hurried to land, for the rain still poured down. The first person who got on shore, sure enough, was the old oddity whom I shall call Mr. Number-One, as I have not the honour of knowing his remarkable name. He had to wrangle for the priority, however; for Jones—just like him!—tipsy as he was, seeing his intention, contended for the honour with him, and was already on the gang-board, when Number-One seeing *his* intention, boldly and bravely pulled him back by the skirts, and jumping a-head of him, away he darted over, crying "I'm first!—always first!" while Jones "went tumbling after," leaving his wife to shift for herself! Mrs. Jones again looked what she intended to say at bedtime.

The first thing which met our eyes, when we had got under cover on the Pier, was the interesting meeting of old Philpott and his "*darter*"—a short, fat, round, lumpy, dumpy, but not unnice-looking little girl, of about seven summers—who flew to her father's arms, or, rather, legs; for as he did not stoop down to embrace her, and she was not tall enough to clasp him higher than his trowser-pockets (a part of the persona

of *pa-s* to whose "entire affection" these dear young creatures too frequently make clinging appeals) she embraced as much of "*Pa*" as she could—(as "she was so considerably below *par*," according to Snubbs)—and began climbing "his knees, the envied kiss to share," though, I believe, it was all her own, when she could get it. Some persons do meet the affection of other persons as coldly as a Polar seal would receive the embraces of a Polar bear—as if they wished they would not be so pressing. Old Philpott seemed a man with these cold affections; for he did nothing, for some time, but look scrutinizingly at his *darter*, uttering not one word! He even kept both hands firm down in his trowser-pockets! At last his right hand made its appearance, with a two-foot rule in it, which he very coolly opened, and, taking off her bonnet, clapped it side by side with little Miss, and gauged her with as much gravity as an exciseman. And then, and not till then, was he pleased to speak—thus affectionately: "Growed an inch, Becky, since last quarter-day! That's a good *gal*—grow away!" Mr. Number-One coming up at that moment, knew them, and, in his way, added, "Yes, yes—don't lose time—grow away, Becky! How do, dear? How do, Dan?" and the old chums shook hands—"What brought *you* here? But don't lose time! Walk and tell me! Come on! Rain's over—only spits! not more than a kitten! Down 'mbrellar! Come along! Quick!" And away went the well-assorted pair of old boys!—What odd people go to Gravesend!

And now we walked from the pier into the town—pitched upon our hotel at once—entered—dried ourselves—thought of dinner—ordered it—passed the time pleasantly, in discussing the dangers we had undergone, till we got it—gave up the idea of taking tea on Windmill Hill, as it must have been so sloppy; and as there were no hopes of a dry voyage home that day, and we had had enough of cabin comforts, we made up our minds to stay where we were. London could very well

spare us for "that night only," as the playbills say: beds were accordingly bespoke for all parties; and after tea we began to inquire what Gravesend could afford us in the shape of gaiety.

"Oh, gentlemen," said our worthy host, Mr. Oswald Overton Widdrington, "there are bazaars—libraries—one next door—and other places of delightful amusement, where you may pass your evening very pleasantly. There's Penny's library, admittance sixpence ——"

"Yes," said Snubbs interrupting him, "and I am told that Tully has let his *Offices*, and keeps a bazaar down here?" Everybody did not appreciate the classicality of Snubbs.

"Edwin sings at Penny's," continued Mr. O. O. W.

"And where does *Angelina* hang out?" asked that incorrigible Snubbs, no doubt in allusion to Goldsmith's beautiful "*Hermit*." Mr. O. O. W. could not say—he didn't know the lady. However, the long and the short is, that we stopped that night at Gravesend.

A NEGLECTED CHAPTER OF HISTORY.

WRITERS of History, when they are pleased to be about to favour their Readers with some important fact which is to give dignity and value to some chapter, commonly indulge themselves in much profound preparatory remark—(which is as provoking to the impatient appetite as a long grace before a short dinner)—and you read paragraph after paragraph, all purposely strung together to postpone as long as possible the important truth which you want shortly to get at. This is a trick of authorship which in this Chapter, so long wanted to fill up a serious lapse in History, I shall most especially eschew; and, after the manner of the famous old Roman historian, shall prefer rather to plunge rashly into my subject, than puddle and pick my way into it like a chicken.

"Thus fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

And yet, upon second thoughts, it is a subject which should be approached gingerly, and tenderly hinted at, and when you have hold of it by the horns, delicately handled: for there is no one part and parcel of the several properties of man so susceptible of injury, so tender of itself, so easily alarmed for its safety, so jealous of its honour. It as sensitively shrinks from the vulgar touch as that tenderling the Touch-me-not: it is as resentful of rude handling as the Scotch Thistle, with its "*Nemo me impune lacessit*:" is as irritable as the "quill of the fretful porcupine;" and as ticklish and dangerous to trifle with as the tender hairs about the nose of a tiger taking his afternoon *siesta*. A man—not of the best good temper in the world—will patiently permit you to satirize almost all parts of his person but the part in question. You may impugn the colour, form, and expression of his eyes, and go so far as to hint that they squint—compare his mouth to a Dutch oven—his teeth to broken bottles on a wall, or upright tombstones irregularly placed—his "fell of hair" to a *chevaux de frise*—his hands to two shoulders of mutton—his fingers to two bunches of radishes—his legs to No. 11—his feet to paving-rammers—his belly to a bow-window—his back to a dromedary's hump—and, where it is broadest, to a huge Dutch barge, clinker-built. All these smart jokes you may cut at the general expense of his person, and he will keep his temper on good terms with you; but dare only to

"Hint a fault, or hesitate dislike"

of the particular—too particular—member of his person which I am so cautiously approaching; laugh at it as too long—too short—too sharp—too blunt—too cocked up—too straight—too red, or not red enough, and his whole "soul is in arms, and eager for the fray."

By this time the delicate Reader will have discovered that I allude to that tenderest member of Man—his Nose. You start, and are discomposed. Well, lay down this Chapter for a few moments, till you have

recovered your equanimity, and can bear, with resolute nerves, to face the subject, and we will then go on again. So—your colour comes again—you can bear to hear the worst now! We will proceed.

You are, no doubt, aware that there is a certain art, mystery, custom, undue indulgence, recreation, or shall I call it manual exercise, much practised in civilized societies of men, and generally known by the vulgar terms "*Tweaking the Nose!*" It is a delicate subject, I confess, to handle; but it must be handled, for it has never yet been sufficiently investigated, studied in all its bearings, and considered by the considerate world in general. Its origin is still involved in obscurity—its use has never been properly defined—and its abuse no writer on ethics, on men, and on manners, has yet explicitly censured. Historians of the most courageous intellects—fit fellows to take that perverse, wrong-headed bull, Public Opinion, by the horns, and twist its stubborn neck whichever way they listed—even these strong-minded men have either touched upon the subject as a ticklish point, better avoided than touched inefficiently, or they have blinked the question altogether. This squeamishness of theirs has, consequently, led to many deplorable errors and ill-founded notions in the theory, and many lamentable mistakes in the practice of the whole art and mystery of "*Tweaking the Nose.*" This is an age, however, which can bear to be informed of the errors of its grandfathers, and which requires only to be put into the right way, when it is in the wrong, to follow it, wherever it may lead.

"*Tweaking the Nose*" is, I am inclined to think, a mode of resenting an affront of comparatively modern origin; for all the ancient authorities—Greek and Roman—are silent upon this most important invention. Aristotle makes no mention of it. Livy has passed it over. Pliny, who looked deeply into the natural history of animals, and made some researches into that of man, makes no allusion to it. Tacitus is taciturn upon the question. Cæsar, though he conquered the country

where it is now most and best practised, names it not in his "Commentaries." Whether it was that the only men who could have properly and knowingly enlightened posterity as to the institution and occasional use of it, were the persons most frequently incident to that peculiar mode of punishing incipient impertinence, and were consequently interested in preserving a mysterious silence upon the subject, (as no man would willingly immortalize the dishonourable accidents which have some time in their lives befallen so becoming a protuberance, which, whatever other uses it was created for, was certainly not originally intended by nature to be put to such base purposes)—whatever cause, I say, has darkened the history of this contumacious custom, its theory and practice ought to be thoroughly understood, and properly defined; and it is the purpose of this chapter to make it understood, and to define it.

The custom of tweaking the nose may probably have come up at the time of the decline of the bushy sort of beards. In ancient days, it was the deadliest affront which could be perpetrated to take a Jew by the beard: indeed, the ancients generally, whether Christians, pagans, or Jews, entertained perhaps too punctilious a prejudice against being plucked by that barbed sign of manhood—for prejudices are of very early origin. When lengthy beards grew out of fashion, barbers became necessary to eradicate the beardiness of the chin masculine, and render it smooth, cleanly, and almost feminine. Beards had, till that epoch, been of various uses; and one of their principal uses was not, even in the infatuated hurry of the new fashion, altogether forgotten: the considerate Few thought it indispensably necessary that some tangible part of the persons of the insolent Many should be still available, by which to lay hold with the one hand, while the chastisers, with the other, belaboured them over skull and scapula with quarter-staff, or, no other instrument being more handy, sufficiently pummelled their impertinent pates with that first of weapons of punishment, the "bunch of fives."

A substitute for the long beard was considered essential to the peace of society—something was felt to be wanted by which to hold a culprit, till he had *quantum sufficit*, and either cried out "Peccavi!" with the Italians, "Morbleu!" with the French, or "Hold—enough!" with the English, (who, to do them justice, are the greatest gluttons in this undue indulgence, as well as the slowest recipients of anything which is promised them in the shape of a bellyful, that the most liberal of punishment could reasonably desire.)

It was then that some daring-minded *Figaro* of a fellow—while holding the prominence in question between his tonsorial finger and thumb—conceived the bold idea of disgracing the member intrusted to his official fingers; and, fired by the sublime conception, in the ardour of that enthusiasm which is apt to intoxicate a man who has made a grand discovery, his genius perhaps suggested the bare possibility of tweaking it, the part in question. He had just shaved the chapman who was its proprietor; and, as he thought, to the satisfaction of both parties: the chapman, however, said that it was not well done; the tonsor swore by our Lady, and the Rood, and the Mass, and by the belly of St. Gris, that it was well done. This was the retort contradictory. The chapman, then, forgetting the king's peace, gave the barber the retort quarrelsome. He of the basin and pole then threatened him with the penalty of his words if he repeated them. Being thus dared to the issue, the chapman repeated the retort offensive, and the chin-cleaner, tucking up his sleeve, with the coolness of his profession, faithfully performed what he had rashly promised, and the first nose was tweaked. The sensation was so novel, that the chapman hardly knew whether to feel affronted, or to be lost in admiration at the indescribable originality of the invention. The news, however, of so uncommon an outrage spread like the four winds, and noses all over the world shook to their bases at the uncommon tidings. Men and boys, and even women and girls, went about

feeling their noses, and trying to operate on themselves: but they could discover nothing wonderful in the novelty, and nothing disagreeable; for they were as yet ignorant that the gist of the operation lay in its being performed by the fingers of another. Crowds, however, still flocked from all quarters to behold the belligerent barber and the craven chapman, the first man on whom so novel an experiment had been so successfully tried. The fearful looked on the nose of the one with a superstitious sort of awe, and a trembling not to be described: the courageous beset the shop of the barber night and day, and were even willing to submit themselves to the same treatment, so they might learn the important secret. The struggle to be shaved by him was fearful; and each one, as he submitted his nose to the scientific fingers of the Newton of nose-pulling celebrity intreated him, in tones that would have melted a heart of Purbeck, that he would give them some little inkling—some vague idea of the invention. But no—he was inexorable. “The secret,” observed the great discoverer, “is my own: it was the reward of genius aided by science, and is not, therefore, the property of the million without either science or genius. You may find it out for yourselves, as I have done, by intuition, or induction, or still go on groping about in blind darkness till the light of intellect leads you to it.” Murmurs arose on all sides, but as the smother of chins could, when he chose, be as rough as a bear disappointed of an invitation to dine out, they dared not press him further to reveal the important secret; and so, with much reluctance, departed for their distant homes, as profoundly ignorant as they travelled thence—just as many a curious gentleman does, in these days, after having made the “grand tour.”

After the first panic had subsided, and reason returned, the common herd began to think slightly of the invention, and at last fairly set it down as a thing of no “mark or livelihood”—so ready are the million to estimate that which is above their compre-

hension as nothing-worth. But men of greater capacities and more liberal minds still thought that there was something in it; and therefore set their wits to work to discover this great succedaneum, this substitute in emergencies for the lately discarded beard. The monopoly of the barber was not patiently to be submitted to; but the several talents of metaphysicians, mathematicians, physicians, tacticians, and all the other *icians*, could not solve the mighty problem. At this time the barber was suddenly struck with an incurable disorder of his fine faculties, and lay senseless on his bed. Thousands thronged about his doors—and a deputation of his fellow-citizens visited his sick-chamber, if possible, to get at some dying disclosure of so great an invention; but he, obdurate man, “died and made no sign,” and men hung their heads in disappointment, and mourning spread throughout the city. This profoundest novelty in science was gradually sinking into oblivion, and men’s minds were settling down into peaceful resignation of so important an invention, apparently lost for ever, when accident brought to light that which this great genius had left in the dark.

A Canon of the Cathedral of Canterbury had been poring over the lives of the Saints, and, among the rest, that of St. Dunstan—that burly champion for the Church against “the devil and all his works,” folio and duodecimo. St. Dunstan, it will be remembered, having been much tempted in the course of his austerities to certain things to which he was particularly inimical, took a certain Black Prince (not he of Poitiers) by that facial index which not even he, all princely as he was, could decently exhibit his face without; there was, however a novelty in the instrument which the resolute Saint used on that occasion, which might perhaps be objected to in these days, now that the formula of the science is better understood. The invention, so far, was certainly St. Dunstan’s; and if there was a difference in the practice, it must be remembered that the science could not be perfected at the same moment that it was

originated; and if he did, as is reported, use his tongs instead of his fingers on that memorable occasion, the error may easily be forgiven in gratitude for the merit of the invention. The more modern experimenters use simply the thumb and the forefinger: the holy wrangler, perhaps, did not desire to touch with his fingers, yet moist with extreme unction, any part of him whom all good Christians, of course, spiritually and bodily abhor, for contagion might have accrued from the very touch. The good Saint may therefore stand excused for what would seem like a departure from established custom, when it is asserted that the custom was not yet established.

This was the earliest modern instance on record of tweaking the nose. The secret was now out, for as the Canon of Canterbury suggested, in a happy moment, and after much laborious cogitation and excogitation on the subject, you had but to substitute the forefinger and thumb for the tongs of St. Dunstan, and the thing was done. The theory once broached, the practice was immediate and universal. In a few hours there was not a chanter or chanting-boy, deacon or sub-deacon, canon or minor, who had not tweaked or had not had tweaked his or his neighbour's nose in the way of practice. Even the worthy Dean of Canterbury was obliged to keep his eyes continually on his nose, lest it should be pulled ere he was aware. Four profane prebends in succession made a lunge at it as they passed him, and were respectively translated from the door of the Deanery into the High-street of Canterbury. Minor Canons were detected, in all parts of the Cathedral, practising this new manual exercise on the marble noses of the effigies of knights, burgesses, and citizens; and when interrupted in their scientific studies by the venerable Vergers, the enthusiasts turned upon the sacred old gentlemen, and commenced tweaking their olfactory members with so little remorse of finger, that aisle echoed to aisle the *ohs!* and *ahs!* of the sufferers. In short, in the space of twelve hours, there was not a

sacristan who could not exhibit severe signs of having been the victim of the ungovernable rage for experiments in the new science; and worse than all, in two days, in spite of the extra-vigilance of both vergers and watchmen, there was not a monumental nose within the Cathedral that had not had its nasal honours pulled down to the dust. The whole conclave of Canterbury were, of course, incensed at these profanations! Excommunications and expulsion *ex cathedra* were obliged to be pretty plentifully distributed among the refractory canons and chanters; when peace, and freedom from the late pugnacious terrors, were once more happily restored within the sacred walls. Indeed, severe measures were necessary, for the revenues of the church began to diminish daily: the pilgrims who would have visited it, to deposit at the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket their votive offerings, forbore to do so, when they were not sure that they might not also unexpectedly deposit their noses on the same spot.

Safety was, however, at last restored within the walls; but without!—whew—the influenza raged with renewed violence! It was computed that, upon an average, there was not a nose in that city, and within twenty miles round about it, that had not been pulled twice in the course of four-and-twenty hours—the extraordinary impulse was so general! We know how soon the fashion or folly of a few, once set, thrives, and becomes the folly or fashion of the many. Example is better than precept, say the moralists: the example being once established, the precept becomes unnecessary, for the practice superseded both, in the twisting of a corkscrew. The use of compressing the nostrils being once allowed, the abuse necessarily followed; for, out alas! the noblest inventions of all ages have not been altogether free from this reproach. A puny, but impertinent whipster had hardly uttered some phrase offensive to the ears polite of some sturdy yeoman, than o' the instant round went his nose, crack went the gristle of it, and pugnacity lorded it over pertinacity

from one end of England to the other. If a stout fellow uttered as stout a falsehood, and some unbelieving, diminutive fellow boldly breathed out "That's a lie, neighbour!" up started my man of prowess, and wringing his nose round as you would the neck of a pullet, coolly remarked, as he let it go, "That's a pull of the nose, neighbour!"

And thus did this immortal invention—this enlightened practice, become at the very outset perverted from its proper use, and run, as the best of human institutions will degenerate, into an abuse. Slanderers and satirists became the unresisting victims of a custom to which the strong enforced the weak to succumb. This fearful state of things, at last, induced the weakly virulent to consider their words and be wise, or silent, which is the same thing; and brute Force reigned lord paramount over impertinent Weakness. It was then that the stronger-handed Law, in its mercy and wisdom, enacted, that noses should no longer be tweaked on any pretext whatsoever; but the refractory, in defiance of all enactments in that case made and provided, still contumaciously persisting in the pernicious practice of tweaking or otherwise unlawfully handling the probosces of the lieges, the Law stood forward as lord-protector of the noses, which were thus occasionally, and here and there, tweaked contrary to law; and noses became, as it were, a sort of wards in Chancery. Serpent-like Slander, gross Insinuation, and rude Insolence then again held up their heads, conscious of the protection afforded them, fearlessly bidding defiance to the forefingers and thumbs of resolute Resentment, sullied Innocence, and caluminated Courage. The fingers of the latter irritable persons might itch after the old practice, but actions for assault and battery stared them in their angry-red faces, and Prudence, at the same moment, whispering over their shoulders, that paying a fine of ten pounds to the king, for compressing the paltry nostrils of one of his subjects, would be paying *too dearly* for such a scientific experiment, they wisely

smothered their resentment, and kept their money in their pockets. The practice thenceforward fell into gradual disuse; impertinent noses "looked up," as the Mark-lane merchants say; and modern instances of the use and abuse of "tweaking the nose" are happily now

"Like angels' visits, few and far between."

PUNNING MADE EASY.

PUNNING is as easy as lying; but there are not so many professors and eminent hands engaged in the one as in the other—which is to be regretted, considering how amusingly innocent the one indulgence is, and how mischievously wicked is the other. The disparity of hands engaged in each manufacture shows, indeed, how small the demand is for punning: whereas the demand for liars is incessant—(good liars are invaluable in these speculating times—especially in your railway companies and political clubs)—the market brisk, and liars may be said to "look up," which they seldom do, whilst punsters are "dull, and in no demand."

Punning, it must not be concealed from you, has many prejudices to confront, and put down, and affront, and put up. Punning is said to be an impertinence, and very impertinent people say so. "Punning"—says a sixpenny teacher of men and manners, calling himself "Αστειος"—"Punning is now decidedly out of date!" Marry, how long? Is it an hour since? With whom is it out of date? With *you*, "goodman Dull?" *You!*—I could make a mouth at you—such a mouth as the sceptical flounder made at the holy haddock marked by the Apostle's thumb, when, vaunting perhaps somewhat too much thereof, it was mocked with most contemptuous wry mouths by that gorbellied unbeliever, the flat fish, who thereupon got his mouth twisted awry to teach him better manners; and to this day all flounders

are wry-mouthed.—Is it with *you* that punning is out of date? By'r Lady, not unlikely, for it never yet was in date with a dullard! “Divine *Paronomasia*”—the good Genius who inspires all thoughts that “palter with us in a double sense”—would never “waste her sweetness on the desert”—your head! But this good-man Dull—this Signor *Asteios*—cannot have done with his simple declaration (which is as good as an affidavit) of his dullness; he goes on to say, that “It is a silly and displeasing thing when it becomes a habit!”—just the time when it is not displeasing!—it is during the noviciate of the aspirant to the honours of Swift, Hook, and Hood, when he lets fly at any bird that flies, and sometimes, with a double charge of powder and shot, brings down a poor Tom-tit, that the sport seems silly, but is not so! When it “becomes a habit,” the real sportsman reserves his fire, and “keeps his powder dry,” till a fine lively fat fowl of a pun goes off with a whirr and a whizz, when “bang” goes his Manton, and some such spaniel as this *Asteios*, unbidden, runs up, picks up the dead bird, and lays it at his feet.

But though this *Asteios* has committed himself sufficiently, he cannot yet have done: he goes on to say—“Some one has called it (punning) the wit of fools.” You have perhaps, in your lifetime, heard a goose sing Psalms to a milestone, and, subsequently, add a few words, by way of general exhortation, to the same impenitent; but, if you observed, he did not turn it from the error of its way! He is preaching now upon this same text; but don’t think of lending him your ear: there is an animal in the aisle which can much better afford to make such a loan. “Fit audience” let him find, “though few!” See how attentive he is now! Let him drone on with his determined dullness—steal out of the church, and let us have a game at hop-scotch on a flat mural stone, till he is done, and had his say. He will make no converts to his heterodox opinions, unless it be Tom Dibdin, or Tom Moore, or Tom Hood, or some such serious bodies.

If you, dear —, have made up your mind "to pun," it will save you a deal of vexation if you, at the same time, make up your mind to listen to, and take no notice of, all sorts of dull-dog, stupid, serious objections to such an indulgence. Prepare yourself to hear the punless persons quote the dogma of that prosy old perpetual president of Piozzi's parlour, Dr. Johnson, touching punning; but "heed not what they say." He, in one of his weak moments (and he had many of them, Colossus as he was) is said to have said, "that the man who would make a pun would pick a pocket." Now, to show how little you can depend upon these morose moralists, this very Dr. Johnson himself would and did make puns, and turned them out in a workmanlike manner, too; and did you ever hear (I never did) that he picked a pocket? I doubt whether he ever indulged that way, because Boswell has made no mention of any such little eccentricity; and you know what a tittle-tattling, gossiping, Paul Pry-ing son of a previous old woman he was; not the sort of "Dougall creature" likely to cloak, conceal, cover up, or wink at the worthy Doctor, if he had ever been so ingenious. Johnson's dogma, therefore, goes to the dogs. Homer punned; yet no account comes down to us of his propensity to pocket larceny. Virgil punned—in imitation, of course, of his great epic master. Do you believe that Horace would not have quizzed him and smoked him not a little before great company if he had had any such affection as an unlawful love for another man's pocket-money? Can you think, for one moment, that the great Augustus—the conservator of the public morals of Rome—(no very onerous task, by the bye)—would have set so bad a public example as to invite a poet—(always a poor creature, and, therefore, liable to suspicion)—to his table who could not keep his furtive fingers from picking and stealing, and let his pocket-handkerchief alone—though marked at the corner, C. A., by the fair hands of his daughter Julia—if indeed such a cleanly luxury was known in those old, barbarous days? It is unlikely.

To get a little out of chronological order — Moses punned! David, Solomon, St. Paul—all punned, but decorously. Those old pagan philosophers, who showed their lack of pockets through their pocket-holes—such grave fellows as old Socrates, Diogenes, Plato, Epicurus, Aristotle, and a score of such foolish teachers — the Jeremy Bentham and Bobby Owens of the young old world—all and severally, they punned, and thought it no transportable offence. You may be sure that the Laughing Philosopher punned: with what else could he have made himself so merry? Not that all the puns of these ingenious old gentlemen were meant to tickle midriffs: some were, no doubt, as grave as owls, and just as wise—levities, such as an undertaker of those days might listen to, and keep his face funereal-wise—unrisible quibbles—such grave puns as, in these days, might go round at a Quaker's funeral with the cake and wine—serious, solemn playings upon words as upon punning pipes—pipes with double sounds or meanings. To come to more modern instances, majestic Milton punned: read his "Superscription" on Hobson, the University Carrier, who

"— died for heaviness that his cart went light!"

Ingenious Cowley punned: how else could he have been ingenious? Locke, he who thought so much of the human understanding—Dryden, Swift, Pope, Arbuthnot, Prior, Gay, Gray, Steele, Addison, and a good hundred more famous fellows, punned! And to come down to our day, the grave Dr. Southey puns! Even Mr. Liston puns! All happy-minded people pun! If a man has nothing on his conscience that much depresses it, he puns, of course!

My friend Herr Von Pückler dined with me, a few days since, in company with six merry friends of mine, all punsters by profession; and the good German seemed to enjoy himself mightily: for when there was a delicacy—a *bonne bouche*—offered him, out of courtesy to a *stranger*, the Herr Von Pückler took it, and opened his

mouth; and when either of my merry-Andrew friends said a good thing which set the others on the roar, the Herr also opened his mouth, and gave a grunting sort of sound, expressive of something like enjoyment, but he did not laugh. He dined with me again only yesterday, but not one of my merry friends was of the set, which was partly a business dinner-party; and, unfortunately for my lively German friend, the members were what the religious world call evangelical people—grave men, who have forgotten how to laugh, and have no notion of such a vanity and vexation of the spirit as being entertaining. Dinner *on* the table, the Von opened his mouth very often and very wide: dinner *off* the table, he kept his mouth still open, as if waiting for something which was wanting. Meantime the sober bottle went round, the discussion of a disputed point of faith went on as gravely, but the Von seemed to take no pleasure either in the wine or the theology. At length he spoke: “I like *buns*!” cried Carl Von Pückler. I rang the bell, and whispered my servant to slip out, and get the German man a dozen buns, and set them upon the table with the next bottle: I thought that the dinner had not pleased his palate, fresh as he was from Germany, and that he had perhaps not eaten enough to satisfy the cravings of nature—German nature—which has a much larger stomach than English nature, and swallows enormous meals. A shilling’s-worth of plum and plain buns were placed before Carl Von, and, for a time, furnished him with some satisfactory amusement. The thirteenth bun having gone after the other twelve, Carl Von Pückler broke silence again by saying, as well as he could, for he was half choked with the quantity of penny sponges he had swallowed, “I like *buns*!” “So I should think,” thinks I to myself. “Get my inordinate friend, Mr. Von Pückler, some more buns, pray do, John,” said I, “and let’s keep him quiet somehow.” Another plate, piled with buns, was placed before the Von, and for a time appeased him. There was ~~a~~ something I saw still wanting to make him happy.

but I could not divine what. Just as the argument grew warm and high, in he broke again with "I likes *buns*." "What do you mean, my dear Von Pückler?" asked I. "Say what sort of buns you prefer, and they shall be got for you." "Nach, nach," said he, half angrily, "not *buns*, but *buns*—to laugh vid—ah!" The murder was now out: the poor imperfect-tongued dear foreigner had all this while been asking me for *puns*, not *buns*!—such "quips and cranks" as he had heard from my merry friends when he dined with me the other day! And I had, all this while, mistaken his complaint, and treated him on the wrong system! When I explained to my pious friends what it was the poor man had been so long desiring, they relaxed their religiously rigid risible muscles for a moment, and gave a tolerable imitation of their recollections of a smile. But when he turned to them with tears in his eyes—tears from excess of bun—the spongy, puffy nature of which diet had made the man spasmodical—and asked them to oblige him with some *buns*—still intending *puns*—they could contain their evangelical gravity no longer: they laughed, loudly, heartily, as though they enjoyed it; and I warrant you it did these sour sectarians good to shake their sides and their lungs with the agreeable strange convulsion. I sent for no more buns, but as I now knew what it was Von Pückler wanted to make him happy, I asked leave of my serious friends to send for my jocose friends Gest and T. Jolly, junior—(Milton seems to have foreknown them, and described them, as "Jest and youthful Jollity.") They came; the German glowed again when he beheld them enter; the grave men took to them kindly, and thought them very pleasant fellows, and not profane; and we had such a merry night of it as would have made the lanky locks of good old John Wesley curl up like parsley.

And now, dear —, I shall begin my serious advice to you. Occasionally you may *act* a pun: if it does nothing more, it will shew that you are pains-taking *and laborious* in your efforts at making yourself agree-

able. For instance, if a Mr. Grabham—(there is such a person extant, and he dines out)—happens to form one of a dinner-party, where you, as luck may have it, also form one, and a ham also happens to make a part of the removes, stick to the ham, and, as decently as you can, oppose anything like its removal: get helped to it several times, which is sure to attract attention. If there are strangers present who don't know who you are, and what you are—whether Christian, Turk, or Jew—they will perhaps conjecture that you are the last, and that you are anxious to testify that a Jew can eat swinish meats, which is sure to draw further notice to you. Your host will, of course, watch your movements as delicately as possible, and wonder what the d—l you are driving at; and the hostess, seeing him so attentive, will naturally be inquisitive also. The rest of the party, who *do* know you, will be struck by the extraordinary coincidence of your being helped three, four, or five times, as the plot works, to ham: "What can he possibly mean by persevering with such intractable, indigestible food?—a man like him, with a genius for indigestion!" will be the uppermost thought in their minds. Among others, Mr. Grabham himself will—aside, as it were—wonder at your perversity of taste: the moment that you catch his eyes glancing at your plate, for the last time filled, that is the moment which you should seize to work out your premeditated jest to a conclusion. Begin by exhibiting the liveliest fears and apprehensions for the safety of your plate and its contents. If you ever saw a hen covering her chickens while a hawk hovered overhead, give the best imitation you can of her extreme concern: cower over your plate, and affect as much affright as possible. Mr. Grabham will stare, and look uneasy, which should, of course, encourage you to go on. Everybody else will stare: what can you desire more? Your host will by this time be so interested by the scene, that he will probably ask, "What is the meaning of all this, Mr. ——" ? Is there anything unpleasant to you at the table?" Then is

your time for an explanation of your "inexplicable dumb show." You will reply—"Oh no—nothing unpleasant! I have only a not unwarrantable apprehension, I believe, of a gentleman sitting beside me with so threatening a name, to one with so well-known a partiality for a particular dish, as *Grab-ham*." If the company are of the right sort, they will receive such a diligent piece of elaborately worked out pleasantry with a rewarding laugh, in which your victim, Mr. G., will, of course, join heartily, in self-defence: if they are not of the right sort, the sooner you hear that "Mr. ——'s cab, No. 365, stops the way," the better for your safety one way, if not for the other.

Talking of taking improper liberties with names, one of the best pieces of impudence of this sort I ever heard of concerns a respectable old resident in one of the Inns of Court, *hight Nation*. A Mr. Waggle, an impertinent dog of my acquaintance, had to write to this Mr. Nation on some legal business, and not knowing whether it was John, Thomas, or Nathaniel Nation he had to address, and not liking to style him plain "Mr. Nation," and disliking just as much to superscribe his letter "*—— Nation, Esq.*"—for the humour's sake—nothing more—he gave him three Christian initials, which his god-fathers and godmothers, as good Protestant Christians, would as soon have thought of "holding faith with heretics" as of sponserially bestowing upon him; and, boldly, he addressed him "*D. A. M. Nation, Esq.*" The letter, so directed, went through the usual Post-office processes, and came, in due course, into the hands of the Temple postman. He, a man of letters at all points, of course, immediately detected the clerical error; for he knew that there was but one "Mr. Nation" in the Temple, and that his Christian name was "John." He thought, therefore, and thought rightly, that the misdirection must be a joke, and greatly did he enjoy that joke. "No sooner said than done," as the moralists say. Off he went to Hare Court, impatient for the *denouement*, or "the issue," as the Templars would say.

He speculated, and not without hope, upon the preparatory laughter which he and Mr. Nation's clerk, coat-brusher, and brief-receiver, Mr. Tomkins Tomlins, would have and enjoy, as a joint usufruct, to themselves on the stair-head upon which Mr. Nation's chambers abutted, before Mr. Nation himself could, in his turn enjoy the joke, or not enjoy it, as his humour-suited. He rushed up the two flights of stairs—like a pigeon sent express—all agog for the sport; but he was fated to be disappointed of his immediate enjoyment, for on the office-door was this *affiche*, written in a round, clerkly hand, and stuck fast with a wafer;—"Gon out. Back in harf an hour." Mr. Walker, the postman, for it was he, *could* have dropped the letter through the usual letter-slit in the door of chamberers; but then, in that case made and provided, he would have lost the innocent laugh he had made up his mind and his mouth to have with Mr. Tomkins Tomlins, the clerk, coat-brusher, &c., of Mr. Nation. What did Walker do in this emergency? This. He went the rest of his walk round the Temple, and came round again to Hare Court, and to No. 5 in it; and once more he flew up stairs, three steps at a time, to Mr. Nation's chambers, "Second floor, Right." The *affiche* was down, and the clerk, &c., "Back," &c. Mr. Walker seized the little brass knocker, which a lawyer, with one brief in a term, would like to hear rat-tat-tat-ing rather frequently; but, what was remarkable, he could not give the accustomed twopenny-postman's "rat-tat," which says "Tup-punce" as plain as knocker can speak. Poor fellow, he was so big with the joke, that "his right hand forgot its cunning;" his knock was a failure, and the little brass knocker fell feebly and inarticulately upon the door out of his trembling hand, shaken with laughter. Mr. Tomlins, clerk, &c., came to the chamber-door—not as clerks do, with learned pen behind the learned ear, or pen and penknife in hand, nibbling the one with the other—but he came with Mr. N.'s black coat, powdered all over the collar, and half down the

back, in his left hand, and in his right a clothes-brush. Walker thrust the letter missive in at the door before it was half open, and then fell back against the opposite chambers door-post in an uncontrollable explosion of laughter. Mr. Tomlins looked severely grave, for a moment, as became him as clerk, &c., to Mr. Nation, when he heard a twopenny postman laughing so indecorously, and beheld the offensive misdirection: but, "as Master was out," he ultimately took the joke, and enjoyed it too, with Mr. Walker; and there the pleasant pair were to be seen, each leaning against a door-post, and rolling about in an agony of fun. But while they were in the height of their amusement, a pair of creaking shoes were heard stepping slowly up stairs—the laughter suddenly ceased—Tomlins darted in and shut the door—Walker ran up the other two flights of stairs, not daring to meet the creaking shoes, because Mr. Nation was suspected to be in them—and "All was silent as death," as who is it says? Mr. Nation knocked at his door—it opened—he entered—his clerk, &c., met him with a smirk—then, averting his face, presented the letter, and got out of court as fast as he could. If he laughed in the ante-room, it was "in his sleeve," or else in the sleeve of Mr. Nation's black coat with the powdered collar, which he kept brushing away, as hard as he could, to smother his giggling with the bustle of his brushing. Mr. Nation, of course, flew into what is descriptively called "a 'nation passion," and threatened to horsewhip the wag who had taken such an impertinent liberty with his respected name. "*DAMNation, Esq.*, indeed!" he exclaimed;—"How dare he? the puppy! What will 'the Profession' be subjected to next, I wonder?" Mr. Tomlins, clerk, &c., got, it is said, notice to quit, and, it is also said, a box on one of his ears, it is not known which, for daring to laugh in his master's face when he showed him the insulting superscription.

So far the joke worked well; but it did not leave off working here. Mr. Walker must go and tell it as a

good thing to another Temple clerk, &c., up another two pair of stairs—who “up and told it” to the clerks in the third and fourth storeys—who told it, as the best joke they had ever heard in their lives, to all the clerks of their acquaintance up and down all the other stairs of the Temple. It came at last to the ears of one of the Benchers, Mr. *Surrey Butter*, a wag himself, dearly loving a mirth-moving jest, and telling one admirably. He told it in the Hall at dinner—all the Benchers there told it to all the Benchers who were not there: it went the circuit with the briefless—who, of course, told it to the judges at the assize-dinner—who told it again to their friends not of the law, and, lastly, it made its way from an antechamber of St. James’s (where it was told to a lord in waiting by the Recorder, in waiting, too, to lay his report of capital convicts before the King) into the Presence-chamber, where it wonderfully tickled his late good-humoured Majesty; and when the court and courtiers, and Inns of Court, had done with it, I became its fortunate possessor, and tell it again in my way, that you, my lively young friend, for whom I write this Tractate and Treatise upon Punning; and joking in general, may tell it, finally, in your own easy inimitable manner.

By the way, it is rather odd, and not by no means “a concatenation accordingly,” that it should fall to my lot—I who am neither wit nor wag—to give you my notions upon wit and waggery; but as you have asked for them, you shall have them. Perhaps the task might have fallen into worse hands, as I may be considered, at least, an impartial judge? You will read me: I give you, therefore, one piece of good advice. As you are a wit, do not read works of wit. There are not many such works: you might carry them all in a barrister’s brief-bag—one of the capacity, for instance, of Serjeant T——’s, which, dropping into one of the law-courts the other day, I was pleased to observe was very sizeable, and full to overflowing. Don’t read works of wit, I say again. Some persons conceive that a book of wit to a

man of wit is like a hone to a razor—that it sets him—gives him a fine edge without wiriness—and makes him shave sharp and clean, without rasping or cutting the thin-skinned blockheads on whom he has occasionally to operate. I do not think so : on the contrary, I suspect that it in no way sharpens the weapon—his wit, but oftentimes takes off the fine edge of its original keenness. I speak from experience, for I have said more good things since I left off reading works of wit—and that is seven years since—than I ever said in all my previous life. One of these I blurted out, and could not help it: the other I half said, and prudently thought I had better not vent the rest : so I drew in my horn, and never had reason to repent it—a forbearance which I recommend to you for imitation : for it is often a greater wisdom to forbear to speak than to speak—a forbearance which some of the few foolish fellows of wits I know cannot imitate—they must out with it, and repent it afterwards, when they have found that their most incontinent tongues have got them into scrapes which they cannot easily get them out of. I have never repented my restraint of the unruly member ; and am, I think, as well contented with being the author of one joke and a half, as Hood—the Rothschild of the *jeu d'esprit* world—was with his millions of jokes.

By the way, again, you may be asked “What Wit is?”—not that you are obliged to give a pertinent answer to so impertinent a question, unless it be by making the querist feel what wit is by drawing your weapon o’ the instant, and thrusting him through and through with it. My friend Waggle—a man of wit, I believe—was once asked, in my company, to describe what a man of wit was. The ungracious dog looked at the dullest man in the company—a slug, a slow-worm at anything quick and intellectual—and made answer—“A man of wit is he who, in the battle of brains, has his rapier drawn first, and has pricked you through your five *button-holes* before you have placed yourself in your

first position." Wit has never yet been well defined. Is it the lightning of the mind?—or is it two dry ideas rubbed together till they fire and throw out a spark—(brilliant, of course)—as the Indians produce flame by rubbing two dry sticks together till they "flare up?" Whatever wit is, it is a scarce production, and hard to manufacture. I don't know half a dozen men in the wholesale trade: there are plenty of retailers, but they are all in the puddling way, and get little or nothing by it.

And now a word or two of general advice. If you have a friend whose name will admit of being twisted, in any way, into a pun, be sure that you let him know that it can be so tortured, on all proper occasions; and there are none so proper as improper occasions—especially if you are in a company partly known to you. If a country cousin present, answering to the same pun-provoking name, should start a little, and look as if he or she thought you was taking a great liberty with his or her dear relative and dearer name, repeat the pun, to put down all puny opposition and exhibit your independence. If then the country coz persist in not relishing your easy assurance, let him pick a quarrel with you, if he will—or do you pick one with him; but it is always better that he should begin the affray, because it is always wise to have "the law on your side." So thought Sampson—(not the gate-carrier—a discreeter man)—ere he "bit his thumb" at "a dog of the house of Montague;"—grave authority—for Sampson was a punster, as well as one who could "strike, being moved," as you may see, if you will study his character as drawn by that punster of punsters and pleasantish playwright, Shakespeare—a poet whom I can recommend to your notice, if you have not already met with him. He was, at one time, very popular, but has somehow—I know not why—fallen into what the learned call desuetude.

But this is a digression. As I was about to say—nothing is so likely to cement a long and lasting friendship as beginning an acquaintanceship with a quarrel. If it is a female coz who is the objector, and you are a

bachelor, and she is interesting and richish, if your own name cannot easily be punned upon, tell her, like a candid man, how she may escape such jokes in future, and handsomely offer her the use of your name for life. There is nothing so promising of marriage as beginning the negotiation with a little aversion on one side: no persons are so soon likely to come face to face as those who are back to back. Nature abhors such a diphthong, as much as the philosophers say she abhors a vacuum. I know of an instance of the young heads of two respectable families falling in love with each other's faces simply because they were placed back to back for a moment, that their mutually-fond mothers might measure head to head, how much John and how much Jane had grown since they were last measured; when it was found that they tallied to a hair, which marked them out as made for each other—so their mothers said. John, being a lively fellow, did what was customary upon such occasions: he jerked his head back, which, as it was hard and tolerably thick, hurt the tenderer head of Jane, made it ache for an hour, and set her railing against him as a brute and a bear. The upshot was, that in one month they were married!

There is no end, as I have said, to punning upon proper names—nor should there be. When you begin with them, therefore, make up your mind resolutely to “go the whole hog.” As I am in the humour for digressing, allow me to remark, by the way, that that phrase—“going the whole hog”—is as much misunderstood as any phrase in modern use. All sorts of incompetent interpretations of that interesting metaphor have been given by all sorts of incompetent persons, not one of which, or of whom, have approached the true and original meaning of this favourite flower of Parliamentary oratory. Everybody ought to know—but they do not—that “a hog” is, in cant language, a shilling. Two scamps—(for none but scamps gamble)—were tossing up for sixpence a time, when one of the scamps becoming desperate—(as scamps do when they are pocket-

ing other people's money)—because he was winning the other scamp's sixpences “like winking”—(which expresses a great run of luck)—disdaining sixpences when shillings might be won as easily, cried out, “Here, I'll go the whole hog with you at a fly!” “Done! Go it!” replied the other, and up flew “the whole hog,” unlikely bird as it is said to be to fly; and the challenger won the toss, and “many another one.” And this is the true origin of the metaphor. Note that down.

As I said but now—when you begin punning on proper names there is no end to your sport: it is like Cockney angling with a pin, a piece of thread, and a halfpenny cane, for sticklebacks—you may catch a bottle-full in a few minutes. I give the few examples: “Examples are better than precepts,” says dog's-eared Dilworth. You meet your particular friend Smith lugging home an anker of Hollands, smuggled from that foreign part of his Dutch Majesty's dominions called Whitechapel—carried clandestinely heaven knows how many miles below bridge in wherries and other smuggling vessels—“run” up the High Street of Gravesend—bought cheap, on the sly, by the voyagers there—and *sometimes*, if the officers of Customs are not on the alert, brought successfully back again to Whitechapel—(a little weaker for the voyage and coasting)—and, finally, is bought again as a bargain, at rather more perhaps than double the price it might have been purchased at in the aforesaid Whitechapel—I say, when you overtake Smith under all these interesting circumstances, he, of course, admits you into his confidence, winks, shakes his head, looks uncommonly knowing, shows you the head of the anker under his cloak, laughs, crows, exults—you chuckle, too—call him an *anker-Smith*—he laughs again—invites you home—taps the anker, and, as it is really “pretty tippie,” as the dry wags say, you and Smith smoke “the smoky” till it is five pints the worse for it. This is a profitable pun, that pays you.

If you are where there is what is slangishly called “a good spread,” and you observe your friend Ward

indulging in port, when there are much dearer wines on table, you may, I think, take the liberty to ask him whether he is in any way connected with the Ward of Portsoken. Is Mr. Card, the eminent flautist—(that is the word—flute-player is vulgar)—one of the party! Contrive some how to get seated next to him, that if anybody doubts what you assert you may safely say “You speak by the Card.” Perhaps a picture-fancier may be present. If he boasts of having picked up a Titian, and talks much of the scarcity of Titians, contradict him flatly—tell him they are not scarce, but plentiful and that you know where there are many, at that very moment, to be bought cheaply. He will prick up his virtuoso ears, and ask “Where?” Answer, “Here!—poly-ticians.” He will hate you from the bottom of his heart; but never mind that: and so will all the politicians present, after your declaration that they are to be bought, and that cheaply: that, too, you need not mind. This is a sort of chain-shot pun, doing double service.

Perhaps the conversation may turn upon that unworthiest of all subjects to engage the attention of a rational man—eating—now exalted into a science, and called Gastronomy. By all means have a fling at that, whether asked, or not asked for your opinion. You may say, that as Astronomy is—knowing all about the stars, Gastronomy must mean, you should think, an intimate knowledge of gas-lamp lighting, as far as your own parish is concerned. If that does not “choke them off,” pinch them a little tighter next time. If a Scotchman is present, he is pretty sure to give “The *bonny* Lasses” as his “toast and sentiment;” every Englishman present, in his awkward attempt at an imitation of Mr. Donald Macdonald’s pronunciation of “*bonny* lasses,” you may be sure, will call them “*bony* lasses:” let them drink the toast, but when it comes to your turn, turn down your glass. An explanation of your extraordinary conduct will be demanded, of course—especially by Mr. *Donald Macdonald*, who will look as cutting as a clay-

more at you. Rise then, and coolly and calmly confess that, if you have a preference, you certainly do prefer *meaty* to *bony* lasses. Mr. Donald Macdonald, if he is one of that remarkable few of Scotchmen who properly appreciate a pun, will immediately give you a friendly grip, and hob-and-nob with you, as "a claver chiel." If he is not so gracious with you, wait till he sings "*The Cam'ells are coming*," and sit silent when everybody else is applauding his song "to the Echo." Mr. Donald Macdonald will perhaps say, "Ye didna seem to ralish ma sang, Sare?" Rise again, and assure him that you did, partly; but that you did not feel so much interest in the announcement that "the Cam'ells" were coming, for you had already seen them about the streets—you were more curious to learn when the dromedaries were likely to arrive, as you had never seen them. If you manage this well, you may make the warm-headed Scotchman quarrel with you, and by tickling him like a trout during the course of the dispute, you may so win upon him—as he is sure to be as warm-hearted as headed—that the affair will end in his asking you to dinner next day. If he does, go.

If Hook, or Hood, or Luttrell, or Dr. Maginn, or any other first-form punster, is present, "affect a virtue, if you have it not," and modestly play second fiddle. You may, in the course of the first course, observe that you do not know which is most pungent, the particularly piquant dish before you, or the relishing pun you have just heard from one of those merry wags, whichever it may be. Either one will take it not amiss. It is always a compliment to a man of talent to imitate him, if you do not "imitate him abominably." It is equally flattering to follow an eminent man; but if, under pretence of following him, you push on before him, you may be tolerably certain of having a pretty sharp sudden pull-up, to teach you better manners. I need not tell you that it is one thing to follow a man, and another thing to go before him. If you cannot immediately understand this, walk up to Westminster Hall on the 9th

of November next, and observe the remarkable difference there is in the carriage and conduct of the fresh Lord Mayor sworn in, and the stale Lord Mayor sworn out; and you will perceive at once what I mean. The difference is as great as between a sole caught yesterday, and one which has been kicked and cuffed about for many days at Billingsgate. Do you understand me now? If not, walk into Smithfield on a market-day, and remark the difference of treatment which a butcher's dog meets with when he quietly follows at the heels of an ox, not offending him, and when he forgets himself and runs before him to pin him by the throat: he gets a horn in his ribs in the one case, and is permitted as a follower in the other.

I believe you know Crease, the patentee of a superior sort of paint, much advertised, and therefore much used?—a worthy man, with a large little family. It is worth your while to invite him and family down to your villa at Wimbledon, for this joke's sake. Having got them down there, send the young ones to amuse themselves at your duck-pond. When they are in the height of their juvenile enjoyment—dabbling in the mud, and all over duck-weed—contrive to lead Mr. and Mrs. Crease in that direction. The tender parents will perhaps hardly know their young, so recently decent, and will haply be a little angry at the mess they are in: put in your joke then, and ask them, “Whether the dear sucklings do not look uncommonly like ‘young water-Creases?’” (Never mind the Cockney vulgarity of the pronunciation.) The worthy couple will be sure to laugh—the boys will be forgiven—the mother will dry their tears—your maid will dry their trousers—and next day the Wimbledon carrier will drop at your door patent paint enough to double-coat every post, garden-pot, and pale about your villa, as a present to their pleasant friend—you! Who else?

As I have said, I think, twice before, there is no end to punning upon proper names: I thank the wag who *made a beginning* with them. Shenstone, the poet,

poor creature! had the weakness—I had almost said the wickedness—to thank Heaven that “the surname which had descended to him was liable to no pun!” Now I thank Heaven that mine is—to twenty puns, the more the merrier. Oh that he were “a living dog,” though an unhappy one, and not “the dead lion” of the Leasowes, that I might have the pleasure of setting Tom Hood at him, to “try a fall with him,” and show him that his name *is* liable to a pun. Tom would take that poor conceit out of him, or break his great heart in the trial.

You may pick out a few very passable puns from among the note-mongers upon poor Shakspeare, and serve them rightly too, the tedious blockheads! Lead the conversation that way, and at a proper opportunity say, that “He who has read every commentator on Shakspeare is very likely to end in becoming what you have become—a comment hater.” Then go on to add, that, “For your part, you can place no dependence upon any new reading by Reed; that you consider Warton no better than a wart on Shakspeare’s otherwise spotless face; that Malone (*Mal*, French, *bad*) is nothing better than a bad one; that Pope is not infallible; that you see no great difference between Johnson and Jackson; and that Hazlitt is almost the only critic who has lit his lamp at the shrine of Shakspeare.” And so on.

Many terms used in the daily business of life may be turned to the punster’s account. The men who use them know this, and often “palter with us in a double sense,” while they are picking our pockets with a brand-new scheme for filling their own, or “trying on” a new fraud upon us, to see whether it will “fit.” An impudent dog of my acquaintance—a fertile projector of new companies, and an ingenious contriver of new inventions to get at other people’s money—was, the other day, boasting that, in a newly-blown bubble of his, he was “backed” by a great personage. Upon inquiring further into the matter, I found, as I suspected,

that he had, indeed, been *backed* in it by the nobleman named; for his Grace had kicked him out of ——— House, prospectuses and all!

Mr. Pope, deliberate poet as he was, was hasty enough to say, that "a little learning was a dangerous thing," and that you should "drink deep or taste not"; but you are not obliged to pin your faith in such matters upon Mr. Pope's sleeve. He might as well have said that you were in as much danger of drowning in a baking-dish filled from a well as in the well itself: or that you were as likely to be drunk from tossing off one glass as draining two bottles of good old Falernian: you must know better, so don't mind his *bam*. "A little learning" (or not quite enough) of our English tongue had like to have proved "dangerous" to my erudite friend Hermann, a German, while "rusticating" in this country, that he might know and see something of the land and the people that gave birth to *his* idolized Shakspeare. The Professor had given his O-no-we-never-mention-'ems, for certain needful repairs, to a little sporting slang tailor in his neighbourhood. When done, and as good as new again, they were, of course, brought home to Mr. Hermann's lodgings. "How mosh?" inquired the Professor, pulling out his purse. "Eight and a *kick*," answered the little slang tailor. Mr. Hermann lifted up his eye-brows over his gold spectacles, and then stared through them at the littel slang tailor, and muttered "*Meine Gott! dat is very oft of him! Vat does de liddle mans vants vid de kick?*" But though grievously puzzled, Mr. Hermann, like a good ready-money German, gradually counted down eight good white Williams upon the nail; and, that done, paused and looked thoughtful. "And a *kick*, Mounseer," (for he thought that all foreigners were Mounseers,) quietly demanded the little slang tailor. Mr. Hermann, a philosopher of the Transcendental school, and a Professor of Humanity at Leipsic, very properly hesitated to comply with the unaccountable demand in full: the demandant, therefore, repeated it, and "bated not a

jot." "Vell, it is very ott!" murmured Mr. Hermann, and he fell into a fit of rumination upon the extraordinariness of the incident. Now the Professor flattered himself that he knew our tongue "better as a native"—better than many of the natives I have no doubt he did; but to be certain that he was making no mistake, he took down Smart's, Jones's, Todd's, Walker's, Johnson's Dictionary from his book-shelves, and turned to the word "*Kick*:" the text was clear:—

"*Kick*, *s.* a blow with the foot.

To kick, *v. a.* to strike with the foot."

Nothing could be clearer; and yet he hesitated! While he consulted the authorities, the little slang tailor quietly looked over him, and as he shut the book once more reminded him that "He hadn't guven him the *kick*." Thus pressed, however painful it was to the proper feelings of a Professor of Humanity to kick any man, even though he insisted upon it, he complied with as good a grace as he could, and, catching hold of the little slang tailor by the collar, gave him such a kick as he might have taken for a horse's if he had not known that it was a German's. Little tailor as he was, as he could count ten—that is, could handle his two bunches of fives scientifically—he immediately gave Mr. Hermann the regular Fives Court "one, two" in his pantry—laid him flat on the floor, eastward and westward—and candidly, and considerately too, told him that he should have given him "two for his nob," if he had not had his spectacles on. An explanation was then made on both sides; when Mr. Hermann, too late, discovered that "*a kick*" was slang for "sixpence"! (*Vide* Pierce Egan, *passim*.) He, of course, apologised in the handsomest manner; and the "little learning" of my friend Hermann, the German, cost him an order for two new suits, as a pacificator of the outraged feelings of the little slang tailor; and an indignant letter to Mr. Smart, complaining bitterly of the fatal omission under the verb "*kick*," and deploring the error into which it had led him.

I know but of one other instance of "a little learning" being "a dangerous thing," and that was the venial error of a foolish Frenchman, who knowing so much English as that "to bait" was to set dogs at and worry some poor animal—such as a bear or a badger—and seeing written up at a livery-stable, "Horses taken in to bait," he jotted down in his note-book, "The English are so fond of cruel sports, that they bait bulls, bears, badgers, and horses."

A "little learning" of the English language is so far dangerous. But leave such mistakes as these to foreigners. Have a shy, yourself, at a few puns in the learned languages. Nothing sets up the pins of a punster so soon and so steadily, and dines him out so surely. The beauty of this sort of puns is, that those who do understand them enjoy them excessively, and those who do not affect to look as if they did, and incontinently cry "Hah!" and "Excellent!" and "Capital!"—so that you please all parties. The Latin language is very accommodating in this respect, and, for a dead tongue, makes itself extremely lively and entertaining. Never hesitate at taking a few licentious liberties with its quantities, or at "committing short and long," as Milton phrases it. It was not bad of a country school-master, for instance, on seeing Bill and Dick, two of his precious pupils, picking themselves up out of a ditch, thus paraphrasing the old exclamation, "*Mirabile dictu!*" "*Mirey Billy! Dick, too!*" What better latinity could you look for from a country Dr. Keate?

It makes a pretty "invite" to send your card to a learned friend with some such inscription as this super-added—"Super hoc leman;" which, if he is wise, he will rightly translate into "Very superior Hock and LeMann biscuits," call a cab, and get at your chambers in no time; if he is otherwise, he will wonder what the d——l you mean by it, and stay where he is, like the blockhead he is. In that case, you have lost a pun, but saved your hock and biscuits: so give thanks. Next day, if you have leisure, you may write him—"What a

booby you are! You deserve a flogging, and the first time you call on me I'll trim your *jactabit* (jacket a bit)." Brought to a sense of his stupidity, he will send you an invitation to supper and a song, to atone, in some measure, for his misconduct; and make all kinds of professions how he esteems you, and all that sort of thing. In your reply give him another Latin pun upon *cantabit*: tell him "He may *cant a bit*, if he pleases, but you cannot *chant a bit*; and, as for eating, you *can't a bit*." He will instantly see what a pleasant friend he has offended; and, if you want a bill accepted next day, be so eager to oblige you, that he will perhaps spoil the stamp by spilling the ink over it, in his hurry to write his name—"John Tomkinson"—boldly across the back of it. If he is thoroughly repentant, he will then send out for a fresh stamp, and say, "You had better make it a hundred, instead of fifty, pounds?"—to which, if you are placable, you will consent, to accommodate him. The next time you invite him, ask him only to tea, and give him nothing but tea—not a cake, crumpet, muffin, slice of dry toast or buttered, or anything which should accompany tea. If he asks for anything, stop his mouth with one of his own favourite Latin sentences—"Nihil ad te (Nothing at tea)."

Now and then, in the course of your practice, a political pun will tell extremely well. It has become so much the custom lately in the House of Commons, whenever any great question is coming to the vote, for half a hundred of the members to pair off, that, if the fashion progresses well, we may in no long time expect to see some such return of a great division as this:—

Ayes	25
Noes	33
Paired off	600

Majority 8

If you are among political people, prove logically, as well as punically, that such a House of Commons as this is, *de facto*, a *Chambre des Pairs*; and that, conse-

quently, if the present House of Commons abolishes the House of Lords, as they threaten to do, they will find themselves precisely in the melancholy condition of the celebrated quarrelsome cats of Kilkenny, who ate up each other, all but the tip of "the tail" of "the late member for Kilkenny."

You may, occasionally, take such a liberty with French pronunciation and a friend's book as this. Fig-gins, who is such a lover of the literature of his own country that he never reads it, but is all for the foreign writers, lends you his French copy of Fouché's *Memoirs*. Make that copy valuable to him, if only for your autograph's sake, by putting this note in the margin upon the name of "*Louis Dix-huit*":—"Qy.?—What relationship was there between our *Dick Suett* and the French one?" If this tells, you may try it again in another shape. After dinner, somewhere, turn the conversation upon cooks—an interesting theme to most men, for cooks remind men of cookery, and cookery of good and bad eating. Compare the two most eminent cooks of modern times, M. Ude and M. Carême, with each other: venture a pun upon the name of the latter—something about *cream*: then express your sorrow that the last is fast superseding the first in reputation with the eating world, and observe that poor Ude is growing thin, and just such a shadow of a man as Dick Suett was when he, that poor anatomy himself, kept all the town alive, and fattened men (with laughter) while he looked starved—Ude's case exactly. Conclude by regretting that so eminent an *artiste* should so gradually decline and fall into *D.-Suett-Ude* (or *desuetude*). This should, properly, be a manuscript pun; but carefully served up, and well seasoned, it will pass very pleasantly off if orally delivered at table.

There are very few tables at which conundrums are not welcome, for your conundrum is a pleasant species of small wit. Good conundrums are well enough, but bad are the best. I will here set you up with a few—*good, bad, and indifferently bad*. Always, as a general

rule, begin your funning and your punning by enlisting the ladies present on your side; and having got "the fair" in your favour, never heed the opposition of the two or three male frumps who would frown down such levities, but go on to ask next, "Why a pickled egg is like an egg thrown up in the air?" They will, perhaps, not guess that, as pickling of eggs is a mode of preserving them now out of fashion, though once very common. (In Clerkenwell there is a locality, properly called Pickled-Egg Walk, which the Clerkenwellers have of course corrupted into Pickled-Leg Walk; and a public tap bears the same sign. "Gentleman's Magazine" adduces this as proof of the antiquity of the custom of salting eggs.) Called upon for an explanation, answer, "Because it is *exalted* (*egg salted*)."

Encouraged by their gentle, genial smiles, or, better still, their well-bred laughter—(and the laughter of lovely girls is more gladdening than wine)—try your hand again by asking them, "Why a man who spends twenty shillings foolishly is necessarily very nice eating?" The ladies having "given it up," after much ingenious speculation, and a great quantity of very happy giggling, let them know that it is "Because he is a pound cake." They will never thereafter lunch upon those heart-shaped delicacies without thinking of you and your conundrum—an impression made in your favour, if ever you should think seriously of making marriage proposals to one of the fair party. When the ladies have retired, take a turn at the old boys. If a sporting man is present, demand of him, "Who was the greatest bottle-holder of antiquity?" If he is a Cambridge man, and has read, he will answer, "The Great *Secunder* (Alexander the Great)." If an officer of the Guards is one of the party, set him up for a wag at the mess-table by inquiring of him, "When one of his men, if fifty years old, doubles his age?" He will suggest—"When he is a *sentry*." A good answer, for a guardsman. If a gentleman grazier is extant, and there—one who talks much of his tups, and ewes, and rams—ask him, "Why a ram is

like a *liqueur*?" A grazier, though a gentleman, is not likely to guess. Answer—"Because he is *noyau* (*no ewe*)."
If an Irishman is present, and you want to put his nationality to the trial, ask him, "To what part of Ireland all the loose women of London should be sent?"—and put him in a passion by replying to his "Whereabout?"—"To *Bellefast*." Then turn your attention to "things in general."

An outrageous jest, as it is called, sometimes tells very well in the end; for though, for a moment, every man's hand is against you for a joke which seems almost no joke, but serious—when it is over, and the participators in it are glad it is no worse—and it is at last clearly understood and pleasantly relished—the outrage discovered to be no outrage at all—and you feel comfortable that you have escaped being kicked down stairs, or thrown out of the window—you rise suddenly fifty per cent. in your friends' opinion of your wit, and their safety in hearing the worst you can say, as it turns out to be the best. My lively friend, Waggle, as wicked a wit as I wot of, lately "outraged all decent society," (so the society said, for a few minutes, till the matter was made plain,) by roundly asserting to the uxorious faces of six married men, that there was not one of them who was not *horned*. Every man fired, and flew up, like cherry-bounce, demanded immediate satisfaction, and felt for his card-case. It seemed as if poor Waggle would have had to meet all six of them next morning: but he explained. Coolly laying hold of the trembling hand of his next neighbour, he shut down his fingers, and cocked up his thumb. He then demanded to know "What that well-pared, acorn-shaped, transparent, hard substance was which covered one-half of its tip so handsomely? Yon cannot call it skin," said he, "nor flesh, nor bone: what is it, then? *Horn!* Ergo—every married man here, who has a thumb, is *horned*." They immediately drank his health, and he became popular. It was his first visit—and now he is always there at feeding-time. Draw your own moral.

It was not a bad pun of that scarce article a facetious M.P., who, while spanking along with a pair of bays, the other day, found his horses suddenly arrested by a sheriff's officer. "Pray, Sir," he inquired, "are you licensed to let (meaning to hinder) horses?" "No, Captain," answered the officer. "Then let 'em alone," said Captain—— say Smith. But the shoulder-tapper knew better than that, and made his caption. So the Captain walked down to the house, as he could not be touched, and the bays were duly impounded.

That same merry fellow, Waggle, one of whose capers I have just related, is the wag for turning a good name to good account. I remember once introducing him to a Mr. Hatt. When they shook hands he turned his jocund eye to me, and softly whispered "Felt." You may be sure that he was not insensible to the fitness of such a name for puns unlimited: however, he let him alone, for Hatt had a pretty wife, and it is one of my friend Waggle's maxims never to make a man appear in any way ridiculous in the eyes of his wife—a very excellent rule; for if she loves him she will hate you for your pains, and if she does not, why should you add one more reason to too many which she has for her distaste? When we were on our way home, he broke silence about Mr. Hatt. "An easy fellow that Hatt—fits capitally, and don't look amiss: 'best beaver' I should think? Wants a *leetle* brushing up, perhaps: never saw so smooth, unruffled a man: nothing disturbs his nap: I don't suppose that if I was to run away with his young wife that he would trouble himself to do more than cry out, 'Why, d—n the fellow, he's taken my best *Hatt*!'" As we walked homeward one of *Hansom's* safety-cabs came dashing along towards us, and just as I was remarking that they were the handsomest vehicles about town, the horse slipped and sent a shower of mud over both of us. "The handsomest cabs about town are they?" cried Waggle: "I say, '*Han'som* is as *Han'som* does!'"

Waggle is a dabchick at a conundrum. He puzzled

a conjuror in that way by asking, "Why a book of Sacred Songs was like Sarah all over mud?" They gave it up. "Because it is *Sall-muddy* (*Psalmody*). " I remember that we were disputing, that same evening, which of two brothers of the name of Bone (friends of his) was the oldest, Harry or Tom. Harry has that pleasing peculiarity of pronunciation for which your thoroughbred Londoners are most remarkable, of asking you to "Take the *hair* with him," when he only intends that you should take the *air*, &c., &c. His brother Tom, a Cockney like himself, avoids that error, by omitting the *H* where it should be, and saying, "Miss'Obbs 'as a very fine 'ead of 'air! Remarkable!" Waggle kept cutting his jokes upon these peculiarities, and gave us a very lively, laughable dialogue between the two brothers, exhibiting their several talents at clipping and disfiguring "the Queen's English;" and as he personated them, that we might make no mistake, he let us know who the speakers were as he went on: "Now *Trom-Bone* speaketh: to him *Haitch-Bone* answereth." Mr. H—k would have enjoyed his "antic disposition" and the dramatic skill with which he worked up the dialogue.

I remember, too, on that same evening, his undertaking to prove, at the tea-table, (the conversation having turned from the high price of sugar, to the substitute for our sugar which the ingenious French now manufacture from beet-root,) that a French wife had an undoubted right to beat Monsieur her husband, and that such a beating must be very sweet and agreeable to him—" *Sucre de Betterave*," or better-half, sugar of wife.

I met Waggle one day, in a swingeing passion, with a hammer-headed horsewhip, such as is used by sportsmen, in his hand. I asked him where he was going, so heated, and in such a hurry. "To *Hammersmith*." "But this is not the way!" said I. "Oh, is it not?" answered he: "Come with me, and you shall see." I walked with him. We had not gone far before we met a man of the name of Smith, who had libelled him. *He charged him with it; he could not deny it, and so*

he horsewhipped him; and this was what he intended by "going to *Hammersmith*," punning even in passion! If Waggle is not a wag, who is? Sir Andrew——? My voice is for Waggle. Sir, you look like a sensible man, and a lover of your country, allow me to canvass you for your vote and interest. Vote for Waggle and good-humour! You will—I see you will—in that well-lighted up corner of your eye. "Waggle for ever! and no Temperance Societies!" What a popular placard and blackguard cry that would make at his election!

I may as well, while I am about it, give you a few more instances of his waggery. A Mr. F. Ayling, not long since, got into the Bankrupt List. Waggle expressed no wonder at it, for, as he said, "He had been *F*Ayling ever since he set up." Not many weeks after, poor Ayling's unfortunate name appeared in the obituary of a morning paper: Waggle saw nothing to be wondered at in that either, for, as he said, "He had been *Ayling* all his life." Some one told him that D——, a gamester by profession, had gone over to Lubeck. "Gone to loo Beck, eh? He'd go to the deuce to loo anybody," said Waggle. As Leigh Hunt says, he could "turn a common name into uncommonness." I remember that his friend Buck, who had never been on the water before in his life, would rashly go all at once on a voyage to Gravesend by steam: the consequence was, as

"The *seas* were rough—the sky was dark,
And distant every joy,"

poor Buck hung out signals of distress before he had weathered Erith, and shortly afterwards Waggle might be seen supporting his friend's "lily" head, like the tender friend he was, and encouraging him all the while to get better by cutting all sorts of jokes at his white cheeks, and his dead whiting's eyes, turned half-reproachfully, half-beseechingly up to heaven every now and then, in the extreme pathos of sickness, as if "the Blue above" was to blame for his weak stomach.

"Bubb, a foolish acquaintance of Waggle's, having

dropped the first of his two Christian names—Hubert. William Bubb—because his too-familiar friends nicknamed him, for shortness' sake, *Hubbub*, or Hub. Bubb, which Mr. Bubb thought a very great liberty taken with a gentleman who kept a cab and a tiger—found himself all at once just as much in a quandary at the new and more horrible license of his friends' calling him "Billy Bubb!" "Now, Waggle," said he, in a deprecatory tone, "don't call me Billy Bubb, I beg of you!" "Very well, Hubby," said the wag, "I won't, as you dislike it so much—suppose I call you *Silly Bubb* (*sillabubb*)?" Bubb cut him dead from that time forth for evermore, and drove his cab and tiger right at him only a few days afterwards.

Waggle is as reckless a joker as I know, but "all in jest." Only think of his rising the other day, and addressing the grave President of a grave, learned society, a Mr. Blanchard—the gravest man I know—with a tankard of toast and water—the only strong liquor he takes—before him—only think of his rising and thus addressing him:

"Mr. Chairman, Mr. Blankard,
Have the grace to push the tankard!"

Waggle only escaped expulsion by the Chairman's casting vote, who loved a joke, grave as he was.

Mr. Waggle has a happy knack at putting his jests into verse made extempore "for the nonce," or the nonsense, which you please. At a public dinner, a Mr. Fuller, a pretty large landed proprietor, spoilt him a pair of pantaloons—(to which Waggle was perhaps too partial, for he wore them, as most wits do their best things, on all occasions—we all have our weaknesses) by pouring a boat-full of melted butter over them, instead of over his fish. He was recommended by some one present to apply a little fuller's earth: "I'll apply for it," said he; and he immediately put up this petition to the author of the stain on the character of his *pantaloons* :—

"A man of acres, and a man of worth,
Give your poor wit—whose only land by birth
Just fills two garden-pots, which ornament
(Or rather were stuck there with that intent)
His *Domus* poor, some of your *Fuller's earth*."

Mr. Fuller took the personality in good part, and, I believe, asked the poor wit to dinner several times, and you know what a mollifying effect such invitations have upon misfortune. Mr. Waggle was, in the early part of his career about Town—(I am not ashamed to say so much, for he is not)—sometimes dinnerless, which improvidence of his might be accounted for in this way: he never thought of providing himself with a dinner, and some one, quite as forgetful perhaps, neglected to ask him out to dine. He had the candour, when I asked him last Thursday what time he dined on the next day—to answer, "Oh! dinner will be on table on Friday, for half-past Saturday, precisely!"—leaving me to understand that he should not dine till Sunday afternoon. Of course I collared him, figuratively, and made him lunch with me *ad interim*. Poor Waggle! I will say this for him, that, for a man of wit, he has not a bad appetite. How many aldermen would envy him that "fatal gift," if they could have it without his wit!

A man of wit is allowed by his friends to take many liberties with other persons for their private amusement, and he should always help himself, and take a great many more, if for no other reason, for this—that it is very pleasant at all times to have your full swing of liberty even to license, and a glorious privilege to have your own wilful, headlong way in anything. A pleasant fellow has an undoubted right, "the law allows it, and the court awards it," to make himself unpleasant if he thinks fit so to indulge; and no one, not so gifted and permitted, should be suffered to put him out, or put him down. Not that it is impossible to be a man of wit or waggery without offence; but as it limits the range of the light artillery of your wanton Wit, and prescribes certain marks, targets, and bull's-eyes to be

hit, or aimed at, and no others, lest his Majesty's lieges should suffer from his random firing, such limitations are a restraint on the liberty of the subject, to which his wilful wit-ship will not easily submit: you might as well hope to prescribe to an impartial Irishman what particular heads he should break at Donnybrook Fair, when his philanthropy is universal enough to embrace the heads of all mankind. A thorough, persevering punster, or a true wag, should be like nothing on earth so much as Michael Malone recreating himself on that favourite field just mentioned—free, flourishing, “quick, nimble, forgetive” of a quarrel, all alive and alert, “anybody's customer” at the shortest notice, his dearest friend his dearest foe, till he has “rattled his canister” and polished him off; that done, it is then quite time enough to explain, shake hands, and be friends again. I take a man of wit to be a fellow with lively parts and superior audacity of intellect—one who has the presence of mind to make himself and friends very merry at the expense of some inferior person with a dull disposition and the spirit of a mouse. Such a man is the proper butt for his bolts. He hits him in all his tender places, probes him to the quick, lashes him with “steel whips,” makes him writhe, wriggle, and tortuously twist about as though a score of scorpions were stinging him, but all in jest—he means nothing—only to entertain “the groundlings” with a laugh, or that substitute for it a “shriek”—the now fashionable phrase for a laugh. I know a few good-natured wits, but they are poor fellows, and will never become popular, on that very weak account. Wits who are afraid to wound should never enter the field: the dashing fellows, the Murats of wit, will drive them out, or ride them down, in no time. A wit, if he seeks popular applause and conquest, should be armed and accoutred like a matador in a Spanish bull-ring, with a cloak, and a dagger under it, to irritate and strike. If you can make up your mind to be such a man as this, my merry friend —, you, who are ambitious of such a reputa-

tion, may be a man of wit. But if you are not, as I hope you are not, one

“Who, for the poor renown of being smart,
Would leave a sting within a brother's heart;”

if you cannot, from some “compunctious visitings of nature,” afford to “go the whole hog,” go no farther than you have gone, but be “merry and wise;”—which I take to mean, be good humoured and considerate of your own feelings and the feelings of others—the happiest aim in the end.

“A wit's a feather, and a ——”

But you know the rest.

THE YOUNG MAN AT NINETY.

A PORTRAIT FROM THE LIFE.

“HE is a citizen,” thought I, as I gazed respectfully at the venerable object of my cogitation, “who, having grown weary of the ways of the working-day world, *now*, in the seventh-day and Sabbath of his old age—wisely forsaking the Mart, the 'Change, and the populous paths that lead up to and terminate at the Temple-doors of too-much-worshipped Mammon—nestles here in this pleasant suburban hamlet, and passes away the small remainder of his days in undisturbed peace and meditative quietness—

“The Town forgetting, by the Town forgot.”

It was an old gentleman who had, a few minutes previously, entered the cleanly, cozy parlour of one of my favourite baiting-places in my untiring perambulations, round and round, and in and out of the unceasing suburbs of this ever-extending city, and was now not unpleasantly engaged in sipping his half-pint of sherry and glancing through the morning paper, who had given occasion for these introductory reflections. He was a remarkable man; for, as I shortly afterwards ascer-

tained, he was more than *ninety* years of age, though looking less than sixty, was hearty and active, quick-footed, with a steady gait, quick-eyed, quick-thoughted, the least bit in the world deaf, not more than was agreeable, and with no other apparent infirmity—short, stout, and well-set upon legs which might make an Irish pavior undervalue his own; and those were becomingly clad in black silk stockings; and it struck me that legs which had stood by a man in the handsome manner his had done, through so many years, were worthy of the honour of such costly hose. A pair of bright silver buckles, of the large old-fashioned pattern, conferred additional brilliancy on the warranted “brilliant Warren” of his shoes; a smaller pair gave dignity and compactness to his knees. His coat, of raven black, was of the old-school cut, lengthy and capacious in all parts, ample in pocket and flap, in short, a reminiscence of the coat of “other days,” ere tailors had turned out that

“Starvelling in a scanty vest,”

—an exquisite. This was surmounted by the old-fashioned, dark-brown, knotted sort of Bath great-coat, once so popular with our good old grandfathers, which, as he crossed the parlour, spread out on either side of him with a robe-like sweep. His hat was certainly hat, and I was not certain that it was not also umbrella; for it was broad enough in the brim to shelter his shoulders in a shower. Under this, on either side, two rolled up curls, or right and left wings of a handsome brown wig, arched over either ear, as if his ears had eye-brows, or, rather, ear-brows; or, to speak a little more “by the card,” no brows at all, but two semi-lunes of hair, to warm, shelter, and protect them. His face was of the very comeliest of all hues—an harmonious mingling of natural brown and red; and though there were as many lines in it as in Denner’s master-piece—his beautiful Old Woman—there did not seem one line too much, nor one ill-favoured line: *his* “lines were cast in pleasant places.” His features and facial formation had some-

what of the Scottish character, and were what some physiognomists would have called hard; and perhaps they would have been so, had not their natural grave severity been softened-off by a frequent genial smile, full of good-nature as a shining autumn day: this gave a general bland expression of mildness and benevolence to his countenance, such as a face with more pretensions to comeliness would perhaps have wanted. It was the serene smile of an old man at peace with himself and with the world—of an old man living still in friendly fellowship with the busy world he had quitted but a little time, and might soon quit for ever: the serene, satisfied smile of an aged traveller, who, as he journeys onward, turns to look back upon the scenes and the pilgrims he had passed through and by upon his way, and after some few moments spent in thoughtful solicitude for the safety of his fellow-travellers, turns from them with a kindly smile, and quietly resumes “the even tenor of his way.”

There may be many human sights more glorious to behold, but I do not know one more interesting—I would almost say more holy—than an old man who has passed his young and active days amidst the stir and strife of this great Babel, London—and in the evening of his life sinks calmly and placidly back into the arms of Nature—a man in experience of the world—a child in the mildness and meekness of that knowledge.

“This old man,” thought I, “has mingled with men, as child and man, for ninety long, long years, and now ‘comes out from among them’ as he entered—again a child at heart. He has seen the vices of the world, and his good original nature has ‘abated no jot of heart or hope,’ and lost not its human patience. He has detected the leprous spots upon the face of society, but he saw, at the same time, that the entire body was not affected with disease—that it was healthy and wholesome still, and not to be given up as loathsome and defiled. The vices of his fellow-men he has, in some sort, forgotten: they are not ‘clean wiped out from the book and vol-

ume of his brain,' but though still registered there, they are diffused over so large an extent of recollection, and form such solitary items in such far-off, separate pages, that they are too unimportant to be aggregated, cast up in one large sum total, and debited against the world. Their virtues he loves better to remember, and he remembers them well: he has credited them more carefully; and instances of goodness start up like stars before him, throwing a shining light equally on the path he has passed along, and that which he now pursues. He looks considerably at his fellow-creatures as they are—wishes they were what they might be—and hopes he has not left them worse than he first found them. There were bad and good in his youth—there are good and bad in his old age. Time, that teaches some men, has taught him to shut his eyes to the inevitable bad, or, if he will consider it, to look on it with pity and charity; and his contemplation of the vices of the bad has made more beautiful the virtues of the good. If he cannot forget the bad, it is because he remembers their repentance: meantime the better deeds of better men live freshly and greenly in his memory, and he glories in their good names. Balancing, therefore, the one against the other, his benevolent verdict is—that mankind might be much better and much worse than they are: and upon mature reflection he thinks that it is safer to let both Ill and Well alone than meddle with them too much."

An old man, such as this, is more venerable in my eyes than all that hoary Time has left us in these latter days. "A good old man," says an early writer, "is the best antiquity—one which we may without vanity admire—one whom Time hath been long working, and, like Winter fruit, ripened when others are shaken down." Every wrinkle in the brow of such a man is, to my thinking, an apophthegm of wisdom—every grey hair a line of instruction. His age is as beautiful as infancy—as endearing and sacred. If the foot of forty *at ninety*—health and temperate looks—the affability

and open-heartedness of youth—cheerful thoughts, expressed and implied—and shining eyes and smiling wrinkles, are witnesses for such a man, my aged friend—for so I shall call him—was a fine specimen of “the best antiquity.”

I have sketched the old man;—I must now describe his companion, for he had one—a dog of the large spaniel breed, who seemed to have seen as much of the busy world as his master. We were very soon intimate, for Prince (that was the worthy four-legged fellow’s name) appeared to be of that amiable class of dogs, who, by a handsome person and winning manners, recommend themselves immediately to one’s good opinion. His master apologised for his familiarities, and in mild terms expostulated with him on the impropriety of his conduct. “You are too dirty, Prince—do you hear, Sir? you are too dirty, Sirrah, to be an agreeable play-fellow!” The conscientious beast seemed to be immediately made sensible that he was, and, taking the reproof in good part, very quietly laid himself down at the feet of his ancient friend. Prince, I suspected, had a great partiality to duck-ponds, for the weeds of those aquatic paradises still hung about him, and decorated him almost to the beatitude of a Sadler’s-Wells Neptune. To encourage him in decent behaviour, the old gentleman began rummaging his pockets; and the result was, the production of two nicely-packed papers of biscuits, which, first having swept a clean spot on the sanded floor, he deposited there for honest Master Prince’s refectory; and then the old gentleman resumed the newspaper. The luncheon was soon over; and the *gaieté de cœur* of Prince returned, but he as speedily resumed the proper degree of respect for self and company, and straightway wore as much gravity in his looks as if he had, in his better days, held the onerous office of deputy of the dogs of Dowgate. I noticed that Prince had a trick of tucking up one leg, and running about on the other three, and this brought up a story from the old gentleman,

which I shall relate, as it was short, and had some point.

"My dog, Sir," said he, "often reminds me of my old acquaintance Jack Simpson. It was said of Jack Simpson—but stay, I had better first relate how what was said of him came to be said: it is not a bad joke, Sir. Jack, when I first knew him—let me see, that was in Seventeen-sixty, not a yesterday recollection, Sir!—"

I stared at the antiquity of the reminiscence, and, for a moment, felt as though I sat in the presence of that more ancient "*Sylvanus Urban*" of that oldest old "*Gentleman's Magazine*," the world—antiquarian Time himself!

"Yes, it was in Seventeen-sixty. Jack Simpson was then a blood of the first pretensions, as far as broad skirts and breeding went—the 'Ladies' Man' at the Hackney Assembly, a fashionable thing, Sir, in that day; first butterfly at Tunbridge Wells, and second butterfly at Bath; a man of pleasure and of the world; gay, full of unfeigned good humour, having wit enough for men, address and a handsome person for women, and spirit sufficient for all occasions. His fortune was but small, and this gay life of his, you may be sure, made it less. In no long time he began to find out that a spendthrift's purse does not always keep pace with the demands on it; and so he took dinners instead of giving them, and was of Sheridan's opinion, that 'the best wine is certainly our friend's.' Now what, in Heaven's name, Sir, had a man of Jack's fortune and folly to do with avarice? It was one of those contradictions in his character which I could never understand, and which must have been a riddle to himself. Sir, it must have been born in him—an innate quality—a genius for avarice; and all his brilliant exterior, which pleased the popular eye, like the wretched finery and foppery of a May-day sweep, only disguised, but did not conceal the dirt and degradation under all. He confessed to me that he felt the first gripings of that heart-

hardening vice coming upon him at that time, while still whirling round in the vortex of fashion. His fingers began to clutch closer, and his whole hand held faster what it held. As if Fortune had become disgusted with his growing meanness, she sent him a thumping legacy of thirty thousand pounds, the hard scrapings of a miserly relation; it ran in the blood of the Simpsons, Sir! One would have thought that this sudden accession would have confirmed him in his sordidness; it had an effect directly the reverse! Off he went again on the old road to ruin with a renewed speed, gained from loitering so leisurely along it as he had lately done. Open house; card tables and faro banks; wine, women, and assemblies; routs, Ranelagh, Pump-room, sedans here, and coaches there; flirtations with Lady A., an alderman's young widow, and the lovely Miss B.; and follies of all sorts, which were nothing if not expensive, made his thirty thousand pounds fly thirty thousand ways; and in three years Jack stood with his hands in two empty pockets—his good constitution gone with his gold, forsaken of his frivolous friends, his flirtation with Lady A. *off*, as the phrase is, and his calculations of the money and matrimonial inclinations of Miss B. *wrong in* the items, and the whole bill disputed. But a well-selected vice never leaves its victim; it is always more faithful than a virtue, and sticks, where it has once fastened, tenaciously to the last. Though run out of ready money, Jack was above want. His estate was even now a clear thousand a-year—quite enough to begin with when you intend to be penniless all the rest of your life. He was seen no more in his old haunts; and fashion lost one of her favourite fools. He disappeared, no one knew when or where. He was known to be alive, for his rents were punctually demanded, but not by him, and his agent kept his secret. Seven years passed away, and he was almost forgotten, when suddenly he re-appeared—grey, pinched, miserable, stooping, and unnaturally old—the very phantom of avarice. The generous few pitied him,

the unfeeling many laughed at him, the perplexed thought he was deranged, and the positive said he was. It might perhaps amuse you to relate some instances of his sordid passion ; but there is more melancholy than mirth in looking at human nature at a discount, and I would rather forget them. In brief, Sir, he ended by starving himself to death through fear of want ; a good estate and forty thousand pounds in funded money fell into the coffers of the Crown, for lack of an heir-at-law ; and the only pleasant fact connected with the memory of Jack Simpson is this waggish remark on his begrudging habits by one who knew him well—that if he had been born with four legs, he would have run about on three to save one !”

The old gentleman smiled good-humouredly over this portion of his reminiscences. Prince—who must have heard the story before, for he walked to the door as soon as “legs” were mentioned—stood ready and willing to start ; his master bowed, said I was a good listener, a great accomplishment, and bade me good morning.

THE COCK, THE FOX, AND FARM-YARD DOG : AN APOLOGUE.

A Cock, the pride of the farm, and conqueror of all feathered rivals in his neighbourhood, was quietly roosting in a barn, surrounded by his wives and chickens, and, as he thought, well secured against all inroads from without, when his attention, not yet asleep, was drawn to a snuffling sort of noise made by some intrusive nose thrust under the barn-door, accompanied by a stealthy scratching up of the earth at the barn-door sill.

“Hilloa ! who comes so late, to disturb these peaceful hours, sacred to sleep and silence ?” demanded the Cock.

“It is I !—What, don’t you know me ?”

"No—who are you?"

"Why, Scout, the farm-yard dog," replied, not honest Scout, but a felonious Fox, on the prowl for poultry.

"Oh! is it you?" cried the Cock: "Well, good Scout, what is your business with me?"

The wily Fox, chuckling with delight that his imposition had so easily gained credit, hypocritically replied—"I know, neighbour, that you wake hourly; and as I have orders to fetch up a flock for our good master at midnight, will you have the kindness to announce that time a little louder than usual, if I should be caught napping?"

"Certainly, friend Scout," answered the Cock, "you may depend upon me. But stop a moment: why did you not ask me to perform this act of neighbourly kindness when I met you on the common to-day behind our master's sheep?"

"Indeed," replied the Fox, "I was somewhat remiss; but I was then employed in counting the heads of the flock, and if I had stopped to speak to you it might have put me out, you know."

"True. Well, well," said the Cock, seemingly satisfied, "then at midnight I will call you up. So now good night, neighbour, good night! for I must not disturb my dear wives and chickens at this unseasonable hour by further conversation."

The Fox then pretended to retire, but skulked still in the neighbourhood of the barn.

"If my senses did not deceive me," ruminated the Cock, who began to "smoke the plot," "that was not honest Scout, our dog, but some ruffianly Fox, who thought to surprise me and mine? But I fancy that I have lived as long in the world as he, and am almost as knowing. I call him up! I'll see him—but no matter."

And thus resolving he settled himself once more upon his perch, and resumed his doze. Two hours had elapsed, and it was a little past the hour of midnight,

when the feathered monarch was again disturbed by the same snuffling noise and scratching below the barn door.

"Who comes now?" demanded the Cock, in an angry tone of voice.

"I—Scout!" replied Reynard.

"Your business now, good fellow?"

"Those who have it in their power to confer favours have very short memories. You clean forgot, neighbour, to call me at midnight!"

"How know you that?" asked the Cock, sharply.

"Why, I was awake, and listened," replied he of the brush.

"Ho, so! were you?" said the Cock: "Then it is plain you did not want me to wake you."

Reynard was here somewhat wanting in his accustomed shrewdness; but recovering his presence of mind immediately, he remarked, "I was curious to see how much one might depend upon the good offices of a neighbour in the hour of need."

"But," rejoined the Cock as quickly, "I was not as sure and certain that you were the honest fellow you represented yourself to be. If you are indeed Scout, my master's dog, let me hear you bark, for I should know his voice from a thousand, and then I will be satisfied."

This reasonable request threw Reynard into a complete quandary, for bark he could not, not being of the barking breed of foxes. However, that he might not altogether betray himself by refusing to comply with so simple a demand, he commenced a sort of imitative growl, nothing like a bark, and then apologized for so miserable a failure by pretending to have a cold, and wishing to avoid waking the family of the Cock.

"It is very well!" said Chanticleer, sarcastically; "I am convinced that you are—what you were born to be!"—plainly insinuating that he was no better than he should be, and much more fox than dog. "It is true," continued the Cock, "that I did not announce the midnight hour: I left it to my son, who——"

"Ha! have you a son?" interrupted Reynard with eagerness. He was answered in the affirmative.

"And is he as dignified in carriage, as splendid in plumage, and as renowned for courage, as his princely father?" inquired the Fox, rolling his tongue round his cheek.

The Cock, tickled by this well-flavoured flattery, though he despised the creature who offered it, pompously replied, "My son is worthy of his father and his father's fathers!"—and he gave a conceited crow.

"And does he fulfil the quaint but vulgar proverb, 'As the old Cock crows so crows the young one?'" asked Reynard.

"To the letter," answered the feathered old fool.

"What! and is his voice as lofty as thine, as capable of waking the world, and as musical?"

"Not perhaps so musical," answered the Cock, swelling with pride; "nor so lofty, and capable of waking the world from its idle slumbers; but, nevertheless, there is not a bird from hence to Barbary who can boast of nobler powers!"

"I feel that I am becoming interested in this promising representative of so noble a lineage. May I not behold this prodigy of princely birds?" requested Reynard.

"Not now—not now: he is at roost under his dear mother's wing: some other time you shall pay your respects."

"Well, well!" said the Fox, "some other time be it, then."

During this conversation the Fox had plied his paws diligently, and was fast working a hole under the barn-door large enough to give him entrance, which the wary king of fowls had not failed to observe, and was prepared, in case of necessity, to rouse up and drive his feathered family, on the instant, to a higher station, out of the reach of Reynard, admirable climber as he was.

But there was a faithful friend and protector at hand to avert the worst—no other than honest Scout himself.

who had overheard the entire dialogue; had witnessed with ill-restrained indignation the bungling attempts of the impostor to assume his name and nature; had laughed contemptuously at his ridiculous endeavours to imitate his own full-mouthed bark; had smiled in pity at the vanity of his foolish old friend, the Cock, who could relish flattery even from a detected foe; and who was then waiting to defeat the enterprise of the notorious enemy of the feathered race, and punish his temerity.

This faithful guardian, with scarcely less skill and craft than Reynard himself would have shown in circumventing his prey, had approached him with such stealthy steps, and had taken up such a position of attack, as made escape impossible, when, finding the Fox perfectly in his power, he suddenly broke silence with this indignant strain of invective:—"Thou arch impostor, villain, liar, robber, and midnight murderer!—now art thou fairly caught in the snare intended for another!"

This rough and sudden salutation made the Fox to start aghast; and he was preparing to steal away, but he saw that escape was impossible. His wit, however, never failing him at a pinch, he began protesting, in a tone of affected levity, that, having indulged too freely in some fine ripe grapes at the Squire's, the delicious, delirious juice had disposed him for a frolic, "Nothing more," he assured the farm-yard guardian, "upon his honour and reputation!"

At this piece of assurance, Scout, who had a spice of humour in his composition, could not refrain from laughing; and Chanticleer himself, amused with the impudence of Master Reynard, might be heard chuckling also.

"Thy honour and reputation!" reiterated Scout, satirically: "Why, thou are reputed for the veriest purloiner and commonest pilferer of these parts! And as for thy word of honour, it would not get thee credit for a bunch of grapes if thou wert to offer thy brush as a pawn for it!—But I have much better employment

than parleying with a knave of thy kidney : so, rascal, prepare for the worst that may befall thee !”

And, saying this, he sprang at the trembling culprit, crouching with conscious guilt to the earth, and at the first bite the piercing teeth of the courageous dog met through his throat. The struggle was not long ; for Reynard, being somewhat feeble from age, was no match for an antagonist in the prime of youth and strength, and in a minute he lay dead at his feet.

“Don’t you kill him, Scout, but just open the door, and leave him to me,” called out the Cock, with his usual conceit.

“Do not disturb yourself, I beg,” said Scout ; “he wants none of your killing : he’s dead enough by this time, I’ll warrant him !”

“Is he, by St. Peter !” —and the Cock crew as triumphantly as if he had partaken in the contest. As for honest Scout, he kept guard over the fallen foe till the morning light broke in, and revealed to his generous master the watchfulness he had maintained, and the victory he had won over the enemy of the farm-yard population.

Beware of him who assumes a disguise, and lurks in the dark : beware of his pretensions, for they are lies—of his flatteries, for they are lures.

SOME WHIMS OF MR. WAGGLE.

“Who is Mr. Waggle ?” the gentle readers will ask, and by that question show too plainly that Mr. Waggle has not the honour of being known by them. Well, they cannot be expected to know every body—“all the world and his wife” and family inclusive ; but as it will really and truly be a pleasant task to me to introduce Mr. Waggle to the reader, and the reader to Mr. Waggle, I will do so at once, without further ceremony, because I am sure that they will be pleased to know so

pleasant a fellow ; and he, on his part, will feel equally happy in making their acquaintance, or more than that, if they like him in their hearts, which I hope—and, indeed, am sure—they will, as the dear old bachelor has many amiable points about him, besides his humour and his whims, and those are not unamiable—for he has almost the monopoly of being a “wit without offence,” so rare a specimen of your wit !

The years of Mr. Waggle are, I should say, Wilkes's favourite number—forty-five : he would not confess to so much if he was asked the important question, especially if a lady asked it : if a gentleman desired to know the important fact, he would not mince the matter, but speak out, and as he is a hearty young old bachelor enough, and has had the felicity of being guessed by good judges to be thirty-five when he is honestly at least ten years older, it is likely that he would exult not a little, and crow over the man who asked it, if *he* had not taken such good care of his forty-five good years as he had ; and boastful of his black hair, ungrizzled—and his broad back, unstooping—and his stout arm, unailing—and his legs, untiring as a horse's (the admiration and envy of Bath Irish chairmen twenty years ago,) would cry, “Yes, sir, I am forty-five,” and, giving his stalwart thigh a loud explosive smack with his strong open hand, would add saucily, “and I don't care who hears me ! ‘*The Widow*’ is welcome to that fact, if she desires to know it : or any other widow, if she is fair and forty. As for your widows of fifty and upwards, they are more particular in that particular, and must have a young fellow of four-and-twenty for their money.” Mr. Waggle is not in the habit of bragging on any other personal point but this of his youthful looks and general sturdiness and strength : on all other subjects he is modest and moderate enough, but he will crow on this. If you ask him how he has kept up his constitution so well, he will perhaps make answer—“I was never serious when I could find anything to laugh at, or anybody to laugh with. The common cares of life, which make some

men early old, have only served to amuse me. I have made merry with them—didn't care for them—snapped my fingers at them—told them to their faces to do their worst—figged them—that is, I didn't care a fig for them—pooh-poohed at them—and laughed in their grave, solemnly stupid faces, till they were put out of countenance, and turned away to 'Try Warren' [a lachrymose friend of his] as it was of no further use trying Waggle; and here I am—none the worse for them! Go you and do likewise!" And then, perhaps, he would strike up

" Fill the bumper fair;
Every drop we sprinkle
Keeps away a care,
Smooths away a wrinkle!"

This is, I believe, the grand-secret of his unfailing health, and strength, and good looks—that he is a merry man—"Muster Merryman," as old Philip Astley would have called him, had he known him, and perhaps have offered him an engagement for "the circle." I wish he had, for I will be bound that Waggle would have kept the sawdust all alive with his "wise saws" of humour, and "modern instances" of wit; and have made those black gods of the gallery—the sweeps—who crowd up there as "plentiful as blackberries," show every white tooth they have in their merry heads while grinning down at him. With what a gusto would Waggle have persuaded Mr. Crossman, in one of the pauses of his act of horsemanship, to take some needful refreshment, if it were only a pail of water and a gooseberry; or a tantaddlin tart—a toad baked in a Welsh wig—that, if he did not like the meat, he might at least try the crust! How the fat cooks from the west end, who "go to *Hashley's* always once a year," would have "anointed" their red full-blown faces "with the oil of gladness" to see and hear "that funny man," such a Mr. Merryman, "as the world ne'er saw!"—And how the big butlers would have thrown back their powdered heads to laugh out at him!—And how "the Johnnies," as the gallery-

boys call the footmen when they wish to be personal, would have simpered and smirked, and laughed subduedly, as they laugh at their master's tables when anything good is said or done, not daring to laugh out!—And how the grooms—not so nice, but giving the rein to their mirth—would have guffawed and slapped their leather-breeches with their excited hands, and rolled about on their saddles or seats, just able to keep in the stirrups, and no more. But Mr. Astley missed him, and Mr. Ducrow does not know his merits.

My attention was first drawn to Mr. Waggle by hearing him, in a public room in the neighbourhood of the theatres, enter upon a humorous speculation, which I shall presently give, as much at length, and as well as I can recollect it, and the terms of it. A gentleman at the same table, enjoying the fumes of his cigar, and gratified with its goodness, remarked severely, as if he still thought of his ill-usage and resented it, "The cigars I had out-of-town yesterday were horribly bad—quite shocking! It was a misery to be obliged to smoke them; but as I could get no better, and must have my smoke—as you know I'm nothing without my smoke—I smoked 'em. 'Pon my honour I was really to be pitied, and 'smelt so—pah!" "Now there," said Waggle, "there is a new misery which our great-grandfathers never could have contemplated—the misery of improper cigars—no more than they could have foreseen the misery of steamboats, cabs, omnibuses, balloons, railroads, and many other modern innovations upon the old miseries of life! But as the world grows older, and science extends its ingenious researches, our cares and wants are not at all diminished, that I can see, but new vexations come to vex the old, and keep us on the grumble and the fret. In fifty years, if I should live so long, I shall not be at all surprised to hear a London gentleman grumbling that his balloon is not waiting for him punctually at his door at the precise moment of time he had appointed, and swearing at the Green or Graham that was to have 'taken him up,' as

an idle rascal not to be depended upon. 'It is so vexing, sir,' he will perhaps say, 'to be thus disappointed! Here was I to have dined with the Stadtholder at five, and had faithfully promised that I would sup with the Russian Republican First Consul at Moscow at eleven! I'll not submit to this delay any longer! 'Here, John!'—and he will summon his servant, 'Go, and call a balloon off the stand, and if Mr. Green comes tell I am gone—I could wait no longer—and say that I was very indignant at his not keeping his engagement.' The servant departs, is gone a minute, and re-enters to say that a hackney-balloon—No. 12,502—is at the door. 'Oh! Is he a steady-looking fellow? Is he sober?' He is assured he is. 'Because the last hackney-balloon I hired, the aëronaut was as drunk as a beast, and I was obliged to manage the ropes and look after the ballast myself. But I took the rascal's number when he set me down at Madrid, and would not pay him his back fare! Let him summon me if he dares! If it was worth my while, I'd summon him; but the poor wretch has got a large family, and gas is so dear, in consequence of the great demand for it last week, to carry over eighty thousand of our brave soldiers to invade America, and bring that tyrant Emperor of All the Americas to his senses, that I don't wish to be hard upon him. By the bye, Biggins, if you're not engaged anywhere, take a trip with me, and I'll introduce you to the First Consul? He'll be glad to see you. I believe you are not on speaking terms with the Stadtholder, since you run down his balloon with yours? Pure accident on your part, I am sure. Very wrong of him to take it up so seriously! To be sure, the rencontre might have been fatal to him, as you were five miles high, if, providentially, one of the Dutch-express balloons had not come up to his assistance, and taken him on board. Will you come with me? Don't say No!' His friend consents, and off they go, Figgins and Biggins, and get to the Hague just in pudding-time."

From that moment I made up my mind to know more

of Mr. Waggle; and as he is such a good-humoured fellow, and so very accessible, it was not long before we were sworn friends. I found, upon further investigation into the man, that Mr. Waggle was, as I have said, forty-five years of age—(a good age, the very primest piece of life—not too old for anything, and not so young as to have any of the follies of youth appertaining to it)—five feet seven inches high—heartly as a buck—dressed like one, in a brown coat with yellow basket-buttons, a buff waistcoat with smaller buttons of the same, white ducks, boots, and a white hat for coolness' sake, not flashiness—good-looking, round, and rather portly—carrying himself well, and carrying a stick as an entertaining companion, not because he wanted to lean on any such underprop, for he had, apparently, no infirmities. In addition to these happy circumstances, he was blest with the highest possible "felicity that can fall to creature:" he had *now* two clean shirts and a guinea a day, independent of all the world, except his laundress and the Bank of England. So that he had nothing to do but live *with* his wits honestly and honourably; and as he had a pretty good stock of accomplishments—could write and compose a song, and sing it well when that was done—take part in a duet or a glee—accompany a young lady's warbling with the pianoforte, or sing to her accompaniment—take a hand at whist—make magnificent punch—carve like an angel—and, above all, keep the table in good-humour, if not in a roar, with the perpetual playfulness of his fancy, he was the happy man who hardly ever dined at home, he had so many invitations to dine out. No dinner-party was arranged but the hostess said, "We must have Mr. Waggle, of course?" "Of course we must," responded the host; and if Waggle was to be had he was had.

Mr. Waggle, in addition to all his own accomplishments, knew all the better part of the theatrical world: was hand and heart with Knowles—polite with Planché—pun-ical with Poole—respected Buckstone as a modest author—was "cunning at fence," when set upon by that

mad.wag Jerrold—was grave, and flowery, and critical with Serle—grew warm and eloquent when describing “the palmy days” of Siddons, Kemble, Cooke, and Kean, if seated tête à tête with Charles Kemble—bandied jokes with Charles Young—helped the late Charles Mathews to a story now and then, which he made the most of—cocked his hat sideways on his head, in happy imitation of the late Charles Incledon—knew Charles Dibdin, and made Tom laugh when he liked—provoked Peake to pun, a thing which Brinsley abominates, by setting him a bad example—had had the honour of being addressed by Sheridan from the hustings at Covent Garden—had smoked a pipe with Jack Emery—smiled in solemn Liston’s out-door face—admired Jack Johnstone’s Irish legs and Irish humour—wept with O’Neill—laughed with Fanny Kelly—grinned at multi-faced Joe Munden in the street, he could not help it, and Joe was not displeased with the compliment—admired at due distance the kingly condescensions of great Elliston—and, in imagination, had shaken Jack Bannister’s honest, hearty hand whenever he met him hobbling about Bloomsbury. In short, Mr. Waggle was and is a man of “most blessed conditions:” I don’t know a more enviable man, except in one respect—that he has outlived so many of his old friends and favourites; but as he is still young, he will find, if he has not found, fresh favourites, who will probably outlive him. Mr. Waggle has but one care, I believe, in the world—that his boots should fit easy and shine eternally; and this is his only weakness. To be sure, his foot is a handsome foot—the ladies say so; and he has the high, aristocratic instep—a mark of true gentility, according to the same indisputable authority. His boy Tam, his *Boots*, takes off all anxiety from his head in the article of boots; for he makes it the pride of his heart and his hand to turn out his master handsomely and brilliantly every day, or two or three times a day, for that matter, if he desires it. Tam knows that he is vastly particular only in that particular, and he loves to indulge him in it. It is a sight to see Tam

seeing his master out in the morning, the blacking-brush in one hand and the shining-brush in the other! There he stands, at the stair-head of his chambers in Pump-court, Temple, as soon as the boots are ready to start; and, glancing his critical eye up and down them, if there is any defective spot, or the least sully upon their brilliancy, gives the finishing touch to them; says, "You may go now, Sir;" follows him down stairs, still thinking of some trifling emendation, and looks after the boots *only* all Pump-court along; is in a state of dread anxiety lest any of the Temple laundresses, carrying water, should splash them; follows them up, with one eye shut, through the Temple cloisters, till they turn the corner towards Mitre-court; and then, and not till then, does he give them up. Then, retiring upstairs, he puts by the brushes, and sits down to rest himself, and wipe the perspiration from his forehead.

Tam, Mr. Waggle's boy, is as comical a fellow—at least he makes me laugh as much—as his master. Waggle and him never have a wry word together, except upon one little inadvertence of Master Tam's. The boy is fond of reading—a good sign—and forgetting that his hands are very dirty, gets at the book his master has been perusing, and makes the leaves all over what Mr. Waggle calls "Day and Martin's marginal notes and references." This sometimes vexes his good master so much that he "drabbits" him—for Mr. Waggle very seldom swears—and "therein is his estate the more gracious." But he makes every excuse for him—confesses that a chamberer's boy has a lonely life of it, and "Must have something to amuse his leisure with, if it is only blacking *books*, not boots. I punish him, as much as I can, by making him buy his own *Hingy* rubber, as he calls it, and clean the pages, as he best can, which he does effectually; for, when I look at my book again, text and marginal notes are both rubbed out." And then Waggle laughs, and calls him a young monkey, and makes him clean two pair of boots by way of punishment, which Tam does off-hand, and bringing

them in, to show that they are done, "Ah, Tam," Waggle says good-naturedly, "you'll be a shining man some day: you are a shining boy now!" Then Tam rubs down his white hair with his black hand, as pleased as Punch, and blackens all his forehead and his nose with over-satisfaction.

Nothing disturbs Mr. Waggle's imperturbable good-humour. As he stepped out into Pump-court the other day, some other chamberer's boy in the attic storey was passing away the heavy hours by spitting out of the window, and watching "the blobs of" undue "dew" descend. Waggle came in for a spat of it upon his hat. Some men would have flown into a raging passion: he quietly looked up, and catching sight of the young gentleman's red head before he could get it in at the attic window, only begged of him "To be a little less *phlegm-attic*." He then remarked to me, "Now, if I had run up-stairs and caned him, I should have two spats on my head to-morrow, out of resentment; but as I was mild with him, and easily pardoned his unintended error, he would feel ashamed to offend again the good-humour of the Third Floor, and will mind where he spits in future. Appeal to the good feelings of the young heart, and you may lay down canes and ferules, and leave the back alone." And then, as Mr. Waggle can be grave as well as gay, he went on with some remarks upon the education and training of young persons generally, which I thought worthy of attention for their gentleness and grace. "Make the hearts of children and young people soft and susceptible," he said, "and, as your steel-engravers do, you may trace deeply upon them whatever lines of beauty or of grace you may desire to see there; and the lines will be almost ineffaceable, and the impressions you may take from them almost inexhaustible. If too soft and yielding at first, time and the world will somewhat temper and harden the metal, and still leave it unhurt and beautiful as ever." And as we were walking on while my friend made these and other like reflections, we got presently

among a cluster of little ones, playing about us in the Temple Gardens. He looked at them affectionately, and said—"Children, my good friend, are white, unstained, loose leaves of the great Book of Life, hereafter to be bound up with it, with God knows what of sin and shame written upon them—with how many a line—

"Which, dying, they would wish to blot!"

or with what of virtue and goodness written large upon them, in good bold characters, which even the hateful hand of the Evil One would not dare to assail, or essay to rub out and obliterate!"

One remark more which he made, and I have done. He said, "A child not innocent is the man Adam falling before the time when he was predestined to fall; is Adam going forth to meet the Serpent half way." "I think," said I, when he had ceased, "that there is much virtue in your young gentleman spitting out of your fourth floor window upon your middle-aged gentleman, when it can lead his capable mind to such grave thoughts as these you have just uttered." He smiled, and answered, "There is no occurrence, however poor and unsuggestive it may seem, that is not capable of grave reflections. You may raise a pyramid of high argument upon the falling of a pin. Newton did that upon the falling of an apple, as you know." Mr. Waggle can be serious, you see; now behold him when he is prankishly inclined.

When he abandons himself to the humour of the moment, Mr. Waggle does not stand upon punctilios, but has his fun or his pun out then and there, without respect of his own person; for he has, as I have said, respect for every person besides. I shall give my readers an instance of "the whole hog" indulgence of his relish for humour, which, in "the acting of it," was not unworthy of my whimsical old friend, the late happy—and now, I trust, happier—Mr. Hippy, of whose reckless self-carelessness he oftentimes reminds me. I was surprised, a few days since, to see Mr. Waggle sitting *(of all places in the world for a man of his nice appear-*

ance) on the always-dirty door-steps of the opposite set of chambers to his own in Pump-court, Temple; I was really surprised, though I knew so well that he cared not for the becoming or the unbecoming when he was in his humours, but would have his game out when he began to play. Between his legs, seated too, was a handsome, advertisable spaniel, who had plainly missed his master or mistress, and lost himself, whom Waggle was catechizing, or, rather, judicially examining, as to his name, if not his place of abode: he was, as he said, "Trying an issue as to what name he answered." Having hold of the long silky soft right ear of the deponent with his left hand, he was admonishing him with the shaking fore-finger of his right hand to answer to such questions as he might put to him well and truly, and without reservation or equivocation. The ingenuous face of the Blenheim-born seemed to promise that he would truly depone, to the best of his belief, &c. Accordingly, after a few humorous inquiries into his birth, parentage, and education—his age—for which datum he looked at his teeth, and found him "Going of four years old"—he came to the leading question, his name. "Was it Pincher? Bob? Pompey? Spot? Sam? Cæsar? Fop? Fido? Towzer? Lion? Carlo? Dash?"—The witness, at that familiar sound, winked his eyes, wagged his tail, wriggled his body about from side to side, and snuffed and snuffled. "He answers to the name of Dash," said Waggle, looking gravely round the Court, as though he was assuring the Bar and the gentlemen of the jury that the witness had deposed to that fact. Meanwhile Dash—for so he proved to be—had his eyes fixed attentively upon those of the learned judge, but at the same time kept describing semicircles with his tail in the learned dust of Pump-court, the Court of Inquiry. "That point ascertained, I now ask you, witness, on your—"

A sudden outcry at this moment broke the studious peace of Pump-court with exclamations of "Oh! there he is! That's him! He's in custody! Somebody's got hold of him! I'm sure it is he! The good-for-nothing

little truant!" These exclamations were all feminine, and addressed by a very nice young lady in white muslin to her black serving-boy in a red waistcoat and red plush shorts, as both rushed fearlessly into that Court "where angels fear to tread." "Tash!" cried Master Mungo, as, in contempt of court, he boldly advanced up to the Bench, the young lady modestly holding back. Dash answered to his name with a loud "Wuff!" as much as to say "Here! Who calls on Achmet? Did Barbarossa call?" "Tash! Tash! 'Tis 'im! Oh, massa, massa," addressing Mr. Waggle, "that is my Missy dog, and she break her heart for him all de day!" cried the delighted footboy, shining like Warren's blacking with satisfaction, as he snatched up the dog, gave him a fond hug against his red waistcoat, which hurt him, and then pushed him yelping into the open arms of his fair young mistress, who was overjoyed at recovering her favourite.

"The Court rises!" said Waggle rising, with grave dignity; and then advancing to the reconciled group, "No!" cried he, starting. "La, Mr. Waggle, is that you?" cried the feminine. It was Miss Amelia Burtenshaw, a favourite young friend! An explanation took place, and Waggle, I could see, was only too happy in discovering that the "Lost, stolen, or strayed. answered to the name of Dash," and that a hundred smiles were his reward for finding him. The red-Morocco boy tucked Dash under his arm, and fell into the rear. Waggle tucked a portion of Miss Burtenshaw under his, and bidding me good morning with a "You see how I do it!" expression of eye, walked homewards with the amiable and ameliorated Amelia, as Mr. Hayley would have tenderly described her. I wish (and yet I know not why I should) that finding Miss Amelia a dog may not lose my friend William Waggle a heart! However, happy fellow be his dole!

But Mr. Waggle is already the happiest man I know; happy in himself, happy in others, happy to see them or not see them if they wish it; happy to dine

with them, drink with them, talk with them, walk with them, laugh with them, be grave with them, live with them, do anything but die with them, "with the utmost mildness," as he sometimes says. He is the most conformable man I know; and conformability is one of the principal ingredients to be put in the bowl when you make your happiness as you like it, sweet and palatable, with the slightest possible dash of citric acid for flavour. He is never to be disconcerted, and put out, or put down, by dulness, or indifference, or the bad humours of his associates. If he is a genius at all—and I think he is—he is not an irritable genius. That is something to say in his praise. See him when he makes a joke which does not tell, (and the best of wags are liable to failures,) and there is no ready laugh—nothing but a don't-comprehend-you sort of stare—he is nowise disconcerted, like some of your wags: he does not sit fidgeting in his chair, muttering vexation to himself, and thinking hard things of his companions—uneasy because unappreciated: he does not insist that

"The club must hail him master of the joke,"

he waits their pleasure, and tries again—has another pennyworth of sticks, and another shy—several shies—careless whether he hits or misses; nor does he spitefully aim at some one's shins this time, because he missed the mark in his first pennyworth. No: he makes even a miss a hit, a failure a success. His wit is double-barrelled: if one misses fire, bang goes the other, and down comes the bird with feathers flying in all directions. He has delivered himself of "a mirth-moving jest," and no mirth is moved, not a muscle moves: some wags would sit stupid and stunned under such a denial: *he* jumps up from his chair, and you see him leaping about the room, and stamping his right foot frequently upon the floor, as if endeavouring to tread something down. "What the deuce are you about, Waggle?" some one is sure to cry. "Oh, only treading that squib out: it was a damp one, and did not go

off well." Then he gets a laugh, or gets it not, he cares not; but he tries again, and will not let his friends be dull if he can help to enliven them. I have seen him make most miraculous conversions in that way, and those who came to sulk and sleep remained to laugh and be wide awake. They could not resist his persevering pleasantry and imperturbable good-humour. Is not Waggle a happy-natured man? Mr. Moribund (a grumbler and a malcontent with himself, and therefore the unlikeliest man in the world to be content with Waggle) says he is not a happy man, which settles the point, that he is.

Having given something like a personal portrait of Mr. Waggle, lend me your attention, good my Reader, while I remember and relate some few of *his* whims and oddities, which are very Hoodish in their way. I have mentioned that he is blest with a greater income of wit than money, and that he is a spendthrift with the one, and an economist with the other. I asked him once how he managed so well with both, and had always a pound and a pun ready upon demand. "I economise, my boy," he answered. "For instances: Whereas I went formerly twice a week to the pit at the Opera, I now make it a rule *not* to go once a week to the high, low three-shilling slips, instead." "Why, then, you don't go at all?" said I, in my simple way. "Exactly so. You may dot and carry that item of expenditure saved. In the article of out-door charity, I make it a rule never to give five shillings at one time to a street-beggar, however importunate, by which I reckon that I save four shillings and eleven pence in each application. Again, I find that it costs me more to dine alone than to mess with half-a-dozen friends." "Why, you keep no table!" cried I. "No," said he, "but most of my friends do—excellent tables. So I economise there again. As wine never keeps well in chambers, I keep no wine; but that does not prevent my friends from keeping it. The woman that looks after my chambers is old; there I economize again. Again, I never stand

sponsor to a child, because of the serious moral responsibilities involved in that position. When a friend has made a recent addition to his family, as his house is so small and so full of little Harveys that, if heaven should send him another little Harvey, he would not be able to shut-to his street door, as my friend M—— says, I wait till the dear old nurse is gone, and there is room enough for me conveniently to squeeze in. Lastly, (the greatest economy of all,) I generally contrive to go to bed by the light of the reading-lamp of a young student in the chambers over the way. There is security from fire in that economy. Sometimes, indeed, my neighbour ‘puts out the light’ before I have got into bed; and, latterly, I fear that he is getting rakish, for he sometimes leaves me to go to bed in the dark: but if he continues these irregularities, I shall send him a neighbourly remonstrance, and bring him home to good hours and his ‘high, studious bower’ again, that I may ‘bless his useful light.’ In all these things, and more, do I economize. How do you like my system?” I laughed, and that expressed how I liked it. The Reader will, of course, understand that Mr. Waggle was only flim-flamming while giving me this system of economy; for there is not a more careless dog, on this side of extravagance, as to money and money-sparing, in the world.

As this entertainment of mine pretends to be nothing more than “a feast of scraps,” I shall not attempt to lay out my table in much order, but, carelessly, shall place the dishes on the board, and allow my welcome guests to help themselves to that which they like best; sure, as I think I am, that there are some few dainty bits which will tickle their palates pleasantly, and send them, not “empty away,” but so much satisfied as to desire more: a healthy sign of appetite, which your good host should hail; for when every dish is tasted, and some made clean, it is no bad evidence that his guests have liked their dinner. And your dainty feeders should hail it too: for if they would have their gusto and hearty relish for “the good things of this life” last long

and healthily to the last, they should always rise from the table with an appetite for more; still "keep a corner *for* the thing they love," but can go without now, and save it, as the children say, "for a feast to-morrow-day." To your chairs, good my guests; and, John, bring in some more clean paper-knives—the best, the ivory-handled ones. So.

As Mr. Waggle is a bachelor and good-looking, and has not said that he will never marry, and would be, I verily believe, a good, hearty-loving husband, and his independent three or four hundred a year would make a very pretty addition to the two or three hundred a year of a pretty spinster, mothers who have daughters whom they think desirable matches, as mothers generally do, and daughters who are of the same opinion with their mothers, of course communicate their mutual thoughts upon matrimony freely to him, "as a counsellor and friend of the family;" and he, on his part, is quite as communicative, and gives his serious "advice gratis," or his comic counsel, upon equally reasonable terms. He had but one client who was not to be moved by what he advised: she would have a will of her own, and if she asked advice it was only to confirm her in her previous determination to act contrary to it. And yet, to look at her gentle features, no one would suspect her of such a resolute self-will! But these gnarled knots in the disposition are deep down in the centre grain, far out of sight, the softest, smoothest woods to the feel being most studded with them: so that it is only when you begin to apply the smoothing-plane of advice, or the severer saw of cutting up, that you come, with a sudden sharp jerk, at one of those knots in the stuff, and find that you have turned the fine edge of your pet plane, or broken two or three of the pugging teeth of your persevering good old saw, with a squeaking snap, short off. Miss M——, the fair spinster *then* in question, said, in answer to a certain tender proposal of his, "That she would never marry any man whose name did not appear in the Army list." This was a sentence of death to

one of my friend's dearest hopes, but he joked away notwithstanding, and said, "Well, my dear Miss M., since that is your determination, I shall, as soon as possible, and if I can, get my name added to the imprint, or introduced among the publishers of that entertaining miscellany. If hereafter it should be published and sold by Messrs. Egerton and Waggle, Whitehall, may I hope then?" The lady smiled a "No:" the red coat would still be wanting. "And would you not marry a Navy list, Nelson sort of man?" asked he. "No, she wouldn't, that she wouldn't." "Well, my dear Miss M., I think your love for red cloth a little too exclusive. To be Mrs. Colonel Somebody is to be something; but to be Mrs. Admiral of the Blue Something is to be somebody. Besides, an Admiral of the Blue, if carefully boiled in matrimonial hot-water, would probably dye red, if your lobskouse-men and your lobsters have any sort of affinity." From that day Mr. Waggle was "a dismissed bachelor;" and Miss M., having married a red coat, is, I regret to say, the wife of a poor, proud Lieutenant, with grey hairs, one arm, and seven children to be supported upon half-pay: but Waggle is his cheerfullest and best friend, and Mrs. Lieutenant —'s admired old admirer still.

This was an incident in the life of Mr. Waggle when he was a young wag: he is now a middle-aged wag, but nothing altered save in age. To come to more recent matters of waggery. "What's *Homœopathy*, Mr. Waggle?" inquired L. of him, an evening or two since: I was sure he would get a satisfactory answer. "Why, I should say, the nearest path or best way home," was the reply. "No, no; now, come, tell me; for here I see," taking up the Literary Gazette, "among the new books, is '*Homœopathy; a Thesis*, 8vo. 2s. 6d.'" "A what?" cried Waggle. "A Thesis," said L. "Erratum—For '*Homœopathy; a Thesis*,' read '*Homœopathy; a Thimblery*,'" said Waggle, shortly and severely. "Come, come, that's one of your old jokes! Do tell me what it is!" cried L. "Well, then it is a bran-

span new German-silver-spoon method of curing disorders by the smallest possible intention of not curing them," said Waggle. "I don't understand it now," continued his inquiring friend. "Well, then, I'll make it plain to the meanest capacity." "Thank you," said L. "Suppose your dwelling-house to be on fire. Very good." "Not so very good!" cried L. "That's as it happens," said the wag. "Being on fire, you would probably apply powerful pails of water to put it out, and send off your man for the engines? You would do very wrong. According to the new light, you should let it blaze away, till it is all alight from top to bottom. You should then pick out the very finest pointed Whitechapel needle you can find in your wife's huswife, and, as coolly as you can, begin poking away with it at the fire till you get tired of poking. When you discover that niggling at it with a needle won't do, and that it blazes more furiously than ever, send to the nearest oilman's, and take and divide two barrels of pitch, one of tar, and tallow *ad libitum*, infinitesimally into the smallest possible pellets, and taking your station over the way, throw one of them occasionally across the street into your house. If it still blazes away, throw two, three, and keep on adding to the number, till your town-house is fairly burned down, even to the ground. When there is nothing more to burn, the fire, of course, will go out. And that's *Homœopathy*!" "I understand it now," said L.; "I never understood it half so well before."

We were sitting in a public room when he was giving this humorous explanation of the last new juggle in quackery, which, I could hear, greatly tickled some one in the next box, for the unseen laughed quietly at intervals, and, when Waggle ceased, a rosy bald head turned the corner of our box, and two grey eyes, windowed with spectacles, peeped at Waggle, and twinkled as they peeped. Waggle o' the instant put on so grave a face that the inquisitive old gentleman might very well mistake the man who had afforded him a laugh,

and, Heaven save the mark ! as I was looking facetious by reflection of my friend's fun, he took *me* to be the wag ! Now, any one who knows me knows that I am incapable—but I won't be tedious. He was too soon undeceived.

"Should you like to see the *Globe*, sir?" said Jem at Tom's coffee-house, "the bower of our abiding," sustaining that respectable diurnal at arm's-length: "Yes, James, which way shall we go?" said Waggle. The old gentleman caught him out in that joke, for he peeped this time between the curtains.

After we had dined, we departed "Westward Ho!" Mr. Waggle meets an ingenious little friend, (whom I shall call Mr. Nodust, as I love to spare the "feelings and the fame" of my friends,) who always makes the most of his five feet and a fraction of person, tilting along the Strand on tip-toe; and as Waggle must say something pleasant to everybody, he asks him, "When he means to give up growing?" (As Mr. N. is at least fifty, it is high time that he should give up that trick of youth.) "Growing?" echoes the walking-stick-high man, and for a moment looks as if he doubted whether it is even now too late for him to "increase and multiply"—"Growing, did you say? I should rather think that, by this time, I have arrived at the extremity of my proper growth!" "Oh, well, I beg pardon! If you consider, and you are certainly the best judge, that you have gone quite far enough in that matter, I can have no objection to your stopping where you are. But it really did strike me just now, not having seen you for some months, that you had filled up the interval agreeably, and had grown taller by an inch or two?" "Hah!" simpered the little man, cocking up his head as if he meant to rival that foolish "Cocking fellow" who broke his neck so lately in "commercing with the skies:" "Hah! perhaps so. The fact is, my dear Waggle, during the wet weather I always wear boots with extra high heels and double soles: it keeps the mud at a distance you know, eh?" and Mr. Nodust

immediately assumes the pleasant features of the Smirke family, and something keeps going off pop! pop! pop! from the lower part of his face, which Mr. Waggle understands to be sounds expressive of laughter, and answers, "You wear double soles do you? Oh, say no more! If you are up two pair of soles, that accounts for my mistake, and you are not taller." And as Mr. N. can bear a little bantering, when it is good-natured, again he goes off pop! pop! pop! and as Waggle is not a man to be given up in a hurry when you can get hold of him, he fastens upon him; *i. e.* he springs up and catches hold of his arm, and having made all fast, hangs there, and tiptoes along at his side down the remainder of the Strand, and won't let go of him, or drop down from him, till he has consented that very day to dine with him, which Waggle, always listening to reason, does, and dines with Nodust, "in the family way," and Mrs. Nodust, in the same.

As my account of Mr. Waggle and his whims is getting to be long, I shall heap together, hastily, a few more specimens, and have done.

A Mr. King, a very tall person, very fond of talking, and who seemed to pump up his pompous nothingness from a great depth, and dribble them forth with a long drawl, Waggle set down as a lecturer on hydraulics, and called his manner of speaking "The *high-drawl-ic* style of *tall-King*—(*talking*)."

A foolish fellow, named Hardy, lately took it into his vain head to make Mr. Moore look small by writing and publishing a set of amatory lyrics; but as he did not like his own cognomen of "*Jack Hardy*," as the appellation of a tender poet, he asked Waggle what tenderer title he should take: "Oh!" said the wag, merciless for once in a way, "I'll find you a softer appellation in a moment. Suppose we say *Fool-Hardy*?"

One of Fortune's trump-cards having turned up, which gave him an opportunity of making a trick, some one said to Waggle that "He ought to be *grateful*," "Great fool I am!" quoth Waggle.

He should have been longer and better acquainted with my dear old friend, the late Mr. Hippisley, for it would have been to his advantage, and to their mutual advantage, if he had. Waggle is, in some respects, a pupil of that eminent professor of humour, but he did not go long enough to school to him to learn all he might have learnt. He would even now be an honour to his old master, if he would but follow my advice. If he would be persuaded, and only go through six or seven winter-fits of hypochondria, it would make a man—a humorous man—of him for life; for there is no process by which a whimsical fellow, such as he is, can be made a thorough humorist so unailing as that. But he won't take good advice: the wretch is too reckless, and headlong, and improvident, to think of submitting to any such trial on mere speculation. He is too happy as he is to calculate the advantages which would accrue to him hereafter. Well, I wish he may not repent it when it is too late! Meantime, let him go on as he has gone on, and be merry and *unwise*, if he will.

A few more of his waggeries, as they will serve as examples for your imitation, and I have done. We were dipping together into a translation of Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered," and though he disliked "this," and did not like "the other" so well, and quizzed a little here and there, he read, and heard me read, with patience, till we came to this couplet:

"Without restraint her sorrows found relief,
Such as may ire produce, when mix'd with grief!"

"Hah!" cried he, "a capital recipe that for making such potent whiskey-punch as will force a man to break the head of his dearest friend ~~in~~ settling the reckoning." He would hear no more.

Two impudent fellows were disputing one day, where he was, which was the most impudent dog of the two! A—— said B—— had the best claim: B—— waived his right in favour of A——: A—— then appealed to Waggle:—"Now *am* I the most impudent dog of the two?" "Yes, A——," said W., "you are; but your

modesty will not allow you to confess it." The modesty of impudence!

He was "on board" the *Lightning*, an omnibus so called, in a thunder-storm, the other day, when an opposite old lady was in a sad pucker lest the storm should strike the coach, and begged an old gentleman to take off his steel spectacles, and hoped he had no keys in his pockets, "As steel was excessively attractive of" what she termed "the electric fluid." "Ah, Madam," said Waggle, "you should have gone in the *Safety*, if you're afraid of the lightning, for here you are in the middle of it." "What do you mean, Sir?" cried the old lady, fidgetting five times as much as before. "Why, this coach is called 'The Lightning,' Madam," answered he. "Deliver me! how blasphemous! Oh the wicked impiety of the age!" ejaculated the old lady, and turning up the whites of her eyes as ducks are said to do under the same circumstances, her fidgettiness increased fifty per cent., and she was impatient to get out. "Oh, never fear, Madam," said Waggle, to comfort her, "if the other lightning should run foul of our *Lightning*, we have got a *conductor*." The old lady turned up the whites of her hands now, and insisted upon being set down at the baker's shop opposite, piously declaring that she would never get into an omnibus again as long as she lived. It was too bad of Waggle to play with the old lady's fears as he did, but he will have his joke out, without respect of persons, sometimes.

Mr. Waggle's jests will never "be the death of you"—so that you are safe in his company: nor will he ever "set the Thames on fire"—out of the mere wantonness of his wit: nor should he—it would not become him to do so, who, in my hearing, advised an ambitious, foolish, young friend of his "Not to apply the match at present, as the river was very damp, and would only smother—not blaze; and as it would make the steam-packets a more numerous nuisance than they are, when they could get hot water for nothing." His jests are, notwithstanding, very pleasant to hear and bear—as long as you are

not the theme of them; and do keep your jaws agreeably wagging, and your mouth moderately wide open—which, if your teeth are good, and the cordage of your features will bear being pulled and played with, and your face is capable of a little lively expression, is pleasant trifling enough. All faces and features will not bear this convulsing and shaking up. Some persons, when you want them to laugh, only look grimly sardonic—others severely *not* serious—some as if they had a horrible pang in a hollow double-tooth on one side, which is being replied to by a pang in a hollow double-tooth on the other side—others look, as the expression is, “as if their heads were half off”—others as if they were about to tumble backwards—others *ditto* forwards—others screw up their mouths and look more grave than ordinary—others as though they were fearful of a locked jaw if they indulged in such a dislocation of their dry, uncoiled machinery—others look doubtful whether they can laugh, but, however, they will try, “just for the fun of the thing,” and they do, and make a failure of it—others only get up what is called “a half laugh”—others a bad imitation of what is described by seamen as “a purser’s grin”—and others “laugh on the wrong side of their mouths.” Laughing well is an accomplishment.

One of Waggle’s excellences is an agreeable trifling with names as cats do with mice, much to the amusement of kittens, but not at all to the entertainment of mice. Give him something of this kind to play with, and he is very happy. I will dot you down a few more of his jokes as examples. Mr. Horn, beating his wife, was with him, “Only *blowing* his Horn.” Introduced by his friend Buss to his family—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine members of the Buss family, “one down t’other come in,” entered the room, the introducer not included, till the parlour was full of Busses. “Why, Buss!” he exclaimed, when they were alone, your house is a sort of *Omni-Buss*, licensed to carry ten, and you have one more than your number; therefore I shall take yours.” In the crowd of Cheap-

side, the other day, he hailed the very tall son of an eminent grocer with a loud "How are you, *Young High-son*?" (there is a superior tea so called, as you are aware.) "Young Hyson" looked at him, and then chimney-potted him. "You see that gentleman with the rosy-coloured gills there?" said he to me. "Yes." "That is Mr. Goodhugh." "Well?" said I, innocently, "where's the merriment? as Dr. Johnson asked." "You don't take the joke—*Good huc!*"—and he gave me a poke in the ribs which sent me spinning into an open shop, by way of impressing the point more forcibly upon me. Mr. Penny meeting him with his four little boys was hailed with "Here comes Penny, with small change for himself?"—four farthings being equal to one Penny, as you are aware. A Mr. Clare being introduced to you by him, you ask "If he is Clare, the well-known poet?" "No—he is *Clair* obscure." His friend Mayhew takes unto himself a wife: he blesses him with "*May* you be happy!" Mr. Porter complains of being weak: "Are you very weak, Porter?" "No, not very weak; but not so strong as I wish to be." "Ay, I understand—half and half—neither '*ale* (*hale*) nor *Porter*." A Mr. Prentis being announced as having left off life, "Ah, poor fellow!" mourns Waggle, "he has served his time out at last!" "Well," said I, gravely, "we shall all die in our turns!" "I don't know that," said he. "There is C——, is so fond of being first fiddle and first oars at all times, that he'd die first rather than we should have the start of him even *in articulo mortis*." I don't know but C—— would, he so hates to be out-done. He overtakes his friend Mr. Oliver Dick in the Strand, taps him on the shoulder, and asks him "Why he is such a great favourite with the unmarried ladies?" Mr. O. Dick gives it up. "Because he is *O. Dick alone* (*Eau de Cologne*.)" He meets R—— the other day, and tells him that he looks ill. His friend shakes his head, and complains of the difficulty he has in digesting anything, however light. "Do you think you could digest a joke?" "Yes, I'll try," and the sickly man smiles,

"though I were sure it would kill me." "I don't wish your *die jective* powers to be put to that proof. Now for the joke. You know Jolland, and what a desire he has for a great contract, that he can embark all his fortune in?" "Yes." "I have found out a gift for my fair—a grand undertaking. A certain unnameable place 'to ears polite' is, you know, said to be 'paved with good intentions.' I have to inform him that it is proposed to *macadamize* the whole, and to request a specification of the terms upon which he will undertake the contract." Poor R——! he was horrified at such profane pleasantry, and, bowing hastily, hurried away. Waggle, for once in his life, looked disconcerted. "Plague had me!" cried he, "I've given the man the wrong medicine!"

"What have I done to offend White?" he asked me yesterday. "Why?" "Why?—why he looks so black at me—at least, partly black and partly White—a magpie mixture of look, in which black predominates." A Mr. Ducrow (not the eminent rider of that name) consulting him about his coat of arms, and what he should place in the quarterings. "Two crows, proper, of course." "And what for the motto?" "*Do crow*, certainly."

Seeing a respectable, dull, elderly gentleman named Webb self-helplessly stuck fast in the mud and slushy waters of a metaphysical question, "Wade," said Waggle to a gentleman of that name, "tuck up your trowsers, walk in, and pull the foolish fellow out! You see that he cannot swim, though he'll contend that he is *Webb-footed*. That's right! I'll mind your boots and stockings."

Waggle is a happy hand at a bit of ridicule. He was mocking the affected pronunciation of a certain popular actress, who has, as he confessed, so much genius, that she ought to be above affectation; and he gave an imitation of her reading Goldsmith's verses:

"Oh Mem-a-ry, thou fand deceiver,
Steel (still) impartunate and va-in,
To farmer j'ys recurring aver,
And tarning all the pa-ast to pa-in!"

"Now," continued he, "I had thought that she had given up 'recurring' to Farmer Gye's ever since he roundly denied, and swore to it, that he owed her two shillings, fair winnings upon a double rubber at Whist; but I am misinformed, I see."

That same evening he proved, I think successfully, that his friend Jerrold, who is young enough to know better, was no older than his (Waggle's) sister's pet pony, Punch—that he, Jerrold, was a one-year-old. And thus 'twas done. "Jeronymo, Hieronymo—Jerusalem, Hierusalem—Jeer-hark-ye, Hierarchy—one Jerrold, one Hierrold—one Hierrold, one-year-old :—Q. E. D. One Jerrold is no older than Punch, my sister's pony—quite as skittish and full of his fun—and just as likely to run away with my sister." Mr J.—I must do him the justice to say—seemed mightily tickled with this joke in his own way.

Mr. Waggle may be said to have punned almost in his dry nurse's arms, for he certainly punned in her dry nursery: as Pope says,

"He lisp'd in quibbles, and the quibbles came.

Indeed I have heard him confess as much, and acknowledge that one of the reasons why he was so dry, or droll, was, that he was so well dry-nursed, or dry-towelled, as he expressed it, in the happy pappy period of his life. I have heard him relate, with great enjoyment of the joke, that when his Nurse threatened—and had the mind to do it too—"To give the tiresome young monkey—drab-bit him!—an eternal beating," he mollified her red anger by crying out—"Now don't, Mammy—I have a beating here already!"—placing her hand on his heart, which was beating fast enough, from fear of her "tender mercies." She could not strike him then, but turned the rolling-pin with which she meant to have "*annealated* him," as she threatened, to its proper use, the annealing of the paste for apple-dumplings. Mr. Richard Jobson, her humble husband, if he did not always dare to avert her hand from his own head,

often diverted it from Master Waggle's, because he knew how hard it hit, when she had a mind to "put her shoulder out," and that might be relied upon in nineteen cases and a half out of twenty. Dick loved the boy principally, I believe, because he did not love his mistress and master; and, secondarily, because, when she complained of being troubled with spasms, the young rascal mimicked her outcries for the brandy-bottle, and hard-heartedly punned upon her "*Spasm, O Dick!*" complaint and complainings. If the chick said these things when just out of the shell, what was to be expected from him when he was in full feather?—That he would be the wag he is.

I was with him a few days since, when he met a short-faced friend with a very long face. "What's the matter, Matthew?" asked he: "I may say that I am sorrow to see your face. What is the matter?" "Oh, don't ask me!" answered the forlorn-looking Master Matthew. "But it is my duty, as an old friend, to ask you. You are in a very bad neighbourhood—you haven't been made a member of that house over there?" pointing to the House of Commons. "No, not so bad as that," said Matthew. "Nor been called up—too early—to that House there?" directing his cane to the House of Lords. "No, hang it! what do you take me for?" "Well, come, then, there is some hope of you. If you have only lost all you had in the world in one of the Courts there," indicating Westminster Hall, "say so, at once, and set my heart at ease." "I'm ruined!" cried Matthew. "And not an M.P.?" asked Waggle. "No." "Nor a Peer?" "No." "You haven't been in the Court of Common Pleas?" "No." "No—you look un-Common Pleas-ed." Mr. Matthew had, it seemed, that morning lost a cause in the Court of Chancery. Causes are not often lost there: that Court takes such extreme care of them, that they may be warranted safe enough for forty, fifty, and sixty years: after that time they do not keep so well, and are sometimes, when they are of little or no value even to the

owner, lost. This was the case in Master Matthew's case; and therefore it was that Waggle consoled him. "Lost a cause!" cried he: "Pray, Sir, who are the persons—where do they 'hide their adminished heads'—who ever won a cause? Did anybody ever win one? No, Matty, gaining a cause is only a legal fiction. Show me the gainer. I have seen thousands of losers, but not one gainer. Let me behold the man that has won a cause! Produce your *Versus*. But, however, you are ruined, and not an M.P., nor a Peer—there is some comfort for you in that." And so he went on for some time longer. An agreeable Job's comfort was Waggle!

"So," said he, a few days since, to W——, a gentleman fast rising into popularity, "I hear that the Queen has sent for you." "Not that I wot of—quite the reverse," said W. "Oh, then, you have sent for the Queen—is it so?" asked the wag. "Well, her Majesty is gracious enough for anything! I myself have just received 'a Message from the Crown.'" Mr. W—— stared, as well he might. So he had, from the theatrical chop-house, so called, to meet a merry friend or two. "Come along with me," said Waggle. We did; and were soon up to our hearts in merriment. The jesting was mainly upon the "sayings and doings" of the Theatres. Among other things, the cause tried lately, *Planche v. Braham*, came upon the carpet. The evidence of a lady singer, when called upon to speak to a particular point, mightily tickled Mr. Waggle. The fair witness had too candidly said—"I was so absorbed in my own singing, that I paid no attention to the other performers." Waggle, from those premises, undertook to prove that the cantatrice's singing must be great, and, *ergo*, that she was a great singer; for as the pretty warbler was as broad as she was long, a small quantity of voice could not have so entirely soaked up or absorbed a singer of her size? Agreed to unanimously.

After Opera followed Tragedy, which, under the new dispensation of things theatrical, has taken the place of

Farce, which has "exchanged and received the difference," as the Army List says. Waggle very soon fell tooth and nail upon the new dogma of some of the Tragic critics, that words of one syllable are the most natural expressions and true language of passion and excitement. "No doubt of it!" said he, doubting it all the while: "And if we live long enough, gentlemen, we shall see the polysyllabled dramatists very properly restricted to the low minor theatres, designated, as they will be, as 'The Theatre Rural Three-Syllables,' situated somewhere in that Boetia, Battle Bridge. Blank verse, if sounding and majestic with many-syllabled words, will be properly confined to dustmen and Paddington coachmen, *et hoc genus omne*. A still lower and more vulgar theatre will be 'The Theatre Suburban Four Syllables,' somewhere in St. George's Fields, frequented by pickpockets, and such like persons, after the business of the day is done, and they relax from their light labours. 'The Theatre Royal One-Syllable,'

'Where ten low words will creep through one dull line,'

will stand where it does—in Bow-street; for, by that time, the other Royal Theatre will be monopolized by a Dutch Opera company, and a *corps de ballet* picked, without sparing expense, from the principal theatres in Boothia and along both shores of Barrow's Strait. If you will wait long enough, gentlemen, you will see all these things come to pass, and many more (*Hear! hear! and laughter.*) Men, you see, are coming to their senses upon this as upon other subjects, and high time it is that they should. The old pedant, who said, 'I pity that person who never speaks but in monosyllables, like Rabelais' Grey Friar', what would he say now, if he found that 'Rabelais' Grey Friar' was not a person to be pitied? He would go to school again, to unlearn all he had learned; and not 'be *put in* six syllables,' which he once gloried in getting by heart, but 'be *put out of* six syllables,' as fast as he could scratch them out of his memory! Allow me in conclusion to add, that

though I cannot assist in this great work, having no calling from the Tragic Muse, I am not indifferent to the immortality of one great poem, *our* Epic, which I should like to live and last. I therefore beg leave to announce that I shall shortly commence mac-adamizing Milton's mighty lines into mighty small words of one syllable, and hope to have your patronage." (*Hear! hear!*) Bob, the waiter, immediately, in the most handsome manner, put down his name as a subscriber for four copies, "As some of those confounded hard *six-synnable* words in Mr. Milton's poem," as he modestly confessed, "had put him out in his reckoning very much." Bob's countenance being given to this great task, we could do no less than subscribe our names. Mr. Waggle could not make out where the keyhole of his chamber-door was that night, and for some time fumbled for it as low down as the scraper. The Temple watchmen came to his assistance, however, and got him in.

I am tempted to add a few more of his facetiæ. "Have you ten minutes to spare?" "Yes: twenty, if that is all." Well, then, I will go on. Some one was detected in passing off, in Waggle's presence, the other day, that old piece of fudge as a bit of good truth, that "The English are not a musical people." This set Waggle's monkey up; for he loves his country, and its reputation dearly, and he stood up for both like a man of mettle. He quoted its glees, sea-songs, simple ballads, and even its sailor's hornpipes, but he could not convince his German friends that the English are a musical people. "They *are* a musical people," cried he, with that peculiar turkey-like crow of his which always precedes a pun. "Prove it," cried all. "I will," said Waggle. "If they were not lovers of the dulcet, would they swallow such prodigious numbers of *hautboys* as they do every summer?" (*Laughter, and cries of "Oh!"*) Even the Germans laughed! There was a triumph for Waggle!

Some one mentioned that he had seen, on his way

there, a huge placard posted against a wall, advertising "*The Wonderful Remains of an Enormous Head*," and asked him what the bill meant. "Oh, it is only an ingenious puff of a new edition of Shakspeare!" said Waggle. The Germans looked respectfully at him, and laughed again.

During the course of that sitting, Mr. Waggle proved, to the satisfaction of all parties round the merry board, that the bills of Mr. Nugee, the fashionable tailor, were no *Nugee*—committing not only "short and long," as Milton objected to some of the unlearned learned of his day, but hard and soft, to have his joke out to the letter, or with the letter. He likewise proved that a lady's *waist* was the most tolerable piece of intolerable extravagance in the world:—That a Mr. *Landor*—one of the persons present, from whom no one could extract a word, he was so close and uncommunicative—was not "an open *Landau*:"—That a certain popular singer, who really has a voice (which so few of your modern singers possess), but wants that last finish of a good vocalist—a shake, was "No great shake of a singer:"—That Jack-in-the-green, who was dancing under the window—it being May-day—was in a very precarious state of health, and being asked "How so?" made answer, "Because he exhibited symptoms of a decided tendency to *gang-green*"—a jest which mightily tickled the diaphragm of an Aberdeen follower of Abernethy. The worthy doctor having finished his narration of the particulars of a mad dog biting two men, his patients, Waggle next undertook to prove, and proved it, that the said mad dog should be a director of the new Asphalte company: "How so?" again: "Why, since he's *bitumen* (*bit two men*), he must be very capable of *biting* several more." (For the proper signification of *biting*, consult any candid Yorkshireman you can catch hold of; and if you will but shake a bridle for a few minutes in any public thoroughfare, a Yorkshireman is pretty certain, at least, to come up.) "By the bye," he continued, "talking of new companies, I have just

received half-a-dozen presentation shares from the managing man of 'The Professing to do Nothing at all but Sell the Shares and Pocket the Premium Company—Capital, Two or Three Millions of Flats'—(for the Statistical Society have not yet made up the Returns)—'Agent for New South Wales, Mr. William Soames'—a candid scheme, which I particularly commend to your notice, gentlemen; and I see, by the advertisements, that our friend Smith here is appointed one of the Managing Committee of 'The Grand Junction Consolidated Set the Thames on Fire, Cheap Steam-producing, Broiled Bargemen, and Boiled Watermen Companies'—capital investments both! (*Loud cries of "Oh! Oh!" and much blushing indignation from simple Mr. Smith.*)

Among other comical atrocities committed by that mad wag on that merry occasion, a Mr. Worsell having popped his head into the coffee-room for a moment, and as suddenly popped it out again, Waggle bawled after the young gentleman (whose father is either a great grower or a monopolizing speculator in cattle-food), "Has your father sold his *mangel*, Worsell?" And some one having remarked that Mr. Worsell, though a handsome boy, was rapidly growing up into an ugly man, "No; he thought he was only becoming *fastidious* (*fast hideous*)."
(Such loud outcries of "Oh! oh!" and such scraping of boots upon the floor ensued as rendered a very respectable hostelry almost as bad as the House of Commons, or a bear-pit.)

I have thus given you some hastily-gathered specimens of his large and his small talk, or wit, or whatever you may choose to call it. "You must take the small with the large as they comes," as the fish-wives say when their customers wish to pick and cull the biggest sprats in their baskets.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS.

THERE are many minor links in the long, strange chain of existence which are not remarked; or, if they are, are thought nothing wonderful, and are passed by and stand for nothing, because they are "unassuming commonplaces," things that "lie about our feet," only to get in their way. That most roving and restless of animals, Man, will wander hither and thither, leave all the hospitable comforts of home for the inhospitable hardships of hungry wildernesses; forsake the refinements of European society for the rudenesses of savage men; straggle, starved and wolfish, among the naked wilds of the rude Western world, and get his white skin stripped over his Midas ears for his curiosity, by some copper-coloured dresser of hides after the old Marsyan fashion: or lose himself where no one can find him, and perhaps perish no one knows where or when, merely to look upon the sooty beauties of inmost Africa, crammed to the fullest plethora of high breeding for the dainty seraglio of some

"Black Mandingo Majesty's brown Minister of State;" or work his dangerous way through Heaven knows what horrid, torrid climes, and among men who long to kill him and eat him, only that he may discover in what unknown spot the muddy, crocodile-breeding Nile takes its rise! White-skinned Man, adventurous, will dare all these difficulties to gratify the spirit of curiosity, when, if he would sit quietly at home by the kindly hearth of his fathers, he might behold objects of as great curiosity lying at his feet, or at his door; creatures as wonderful in their natures, habits, and manners, as the hippopotami, or anthropophagi, or any other "wonderful wonders" of the unknown world. But what lies immediately under our noses, let it teach whatever great or useful truths it may, we either overlook, or, seeing it, consider it unworthy of note, and pass on. Yet, if we could only now and then, in our home-wanderings,

meet a tabby cat, or a spaniel who would not dirty our nankeens with his fondlings, we should think them very beautiful and exceedingly curious creatures, and write volume upon volume, describing their instincts, habits, and appearances.

Let us now atone for this long neglect and oversight of so many of these minor and more familiar wonders of the all-fashioning hand of Nature; and drawing our arm-chairs into our comfortable fireside corners, glance around us at things too intimate to be left altogether unstudied, and too wisely contrived and remarkable to be uninteresting.

And, first, we will examine those "small deer" that visit our very hearths, and house with us in the chinks and corners of our dwellings. What is that little, crawling creature, my dear young friend, C——, of which you are so shriekingly afraid? "A black Beetle! horrible reptile!" Not a jot, my young beauty; not a jot! There is nothing horrible in any genuine, unspoiled, uncorrupted work of Nature: there is even a visible beauty in that insect which you hastily consider ugly; and, no doubt, a hidden usefulness, if we were but wise enough to learn wherein it lies, or were curious enough to search it out. Look at the bright polish of its jet back, which a whimsical friend of mine will insist to have been wrought up to that brilliant perfection of lustre by the blacking of some insect Day-and-Martin! Observe the beautiful azure lines of its body and limbs, encased as they are in that impenetrable mail to its natural enemies, though the iron foot of man may crush it, and make its buckler and shield but weak defences. The Beetle, despised as it seems to be, in the eye of Fancy is a sort of domestic Rhinoceros, epitomised for the use of small families; and ought not to be thought less wonderful than its mighty brother of the watery wilds, because it is common, insignificant in size, and feeble in powers. That it has its beauties not even the most beautiful should deny; and that it has its uses might be discovered, or may, at

least, be imagined. Perhaps they are a sort of amateur surveyors of houses, and visit us in a friendly way, when they become old and dangerous, to warn us to quit them at the next quarterday, or take the consequences, as well as the tumbling tiles and timbers, on our heads? Perhaps they are a kind of domestic physicians, paying unpaid professional visits, to warn us of damp rooms, and so save us from the asthmatics and rheumatics contracted from such parlous, pernicious places? a grave conjecture, which is much confirmed by the sober livery they wear, black being the favourite colour of the costume of your Doctors in all countries. And if they have no other use than suggesting these fancies to our minds, there is a use in that as valuable as things more "palpable to sense and sight" are to other minds, more material in their fancies, and mercenary in their desires. To do gentlemanly justice, however, to your fears, and your doubts of their handsomeness, I confess that I have had my suspicions of their ugliness, suggested, perhaps, by their sudden scampering away from unexpected light, for "creatures who love darkness, their deeds are evil." But these suspicions ceased as soon as I observed that it was from artificial, not natural light that they ran away, for they do not fear the light of day; and if the cook is merciful, and wears list shoes, which may be heard in her hasty route from drawer to dresser, from box to bin or biggin, they fear not to venture forth gravely but gallantly, and dare to cross the streaks of sunshine which sometimes visit our kitchens in the dog-days, and, added to the mutton and man and woman roasting fires therein, make that Asiatic region "insulting hot," and the boiling and broiling inhabitants thereof intolerant of anything in their way, from the kicked and scalded cat downwards.

And thou, little brown brother of the black Beetle, who runnest about, "shrilling thy song of sociable mirth" under our very feet,

"In a lone Winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence,"

which, to the waking dreamer, "in drowsiness half lost," through over-cultivation of the cozy, kindly comforts of an English fireside, sounds like the grasshopper's voice "among the sunny hills"—merry, mirth-loving little Cricket—favourite of all social poets, from Greek Anacreon to English Herrick and Dickens, who have sung to thee and of thee, and, like thee, have chirped their winter carols, "in warmth increasing ever," and as immortally as if they never meant to die; wherever I hear one of thy warmth-loving brethren I have a good opinion of the household lord of the hearth thus visited: for ye remind me of those Minstrels of the olden firesides of hospitable halls, which were always a sign to weary Pilgrims of brave cheer, and high-piled fires, and merry wassail-bowls; and wherever I hear your shrill sweetness, there do I throw down *my* staff in confidence, and give my mind and my mouth to mirth and singing. Encourage them, then, ye sociable spirits and warm-hearted, winter-fireside lovers! Spare their ashy haunts, ye maidenly cleansers of hearths and chimney-corners; and never let the rude broom sweep them carelessly away among the cold, morning cinders, to be riddled through the cutting wires of the sieve of savingness, and left to perish in the cheerless dust-hole! And ye, the lords of hospitality, be equally merciful to those holes and corners which are the outlets of their continual-trilling song, and never let the profane trowel of the plaisterer close up those cosy little orifices of good cheer and pleasant chirping: so shall the friendly Lares love ye, and bless your houses from nightly harm, and keep your seal-coal fires bright and undying as those eternal fires that light the stars!

But though I can tolerate every created thing, there is one race of beings which I cannot love, and those are Spiders. I would not, however, either destroy or have them destroyed: they have their virtues and their uses, though I know them not; but I cannot respect their hard habits and misanthropical manners, which seem, to my mind, rapacious, treacherous, and cruel. Ima-

gine yourself, my dear Miss, that little, thoughtless, buzzing, gad-about creature, fond of the sweets of life, familiarly called a Fly, with gauze wings, instead of that muslin frock of your's—imagine yourself whisking from place to place, from violet to rose, from cream-pot to sugar-basin, dreaming nothing of danger, and nowise conscious of trespass; imagine yourself, in this hey-day of liberty, suddenly entravelled in the meshes of an unperceived net, and an ugly creature, all legs and greedy haste, pouncing down upon you, seizing you Heaven knows where, and, like a sanguinary Vampyre, sucking the life-blood out of you! Can such a ferocious fellow expect to find love in the heart of anything human? If there was, indeed, anything like fair play between the contending powers, I could excuse him: or if his cruelty was the intemperance of vexation at having his woven work broken by the heedlessness of the frivolous little insect; but he does not assume even the appearance of fair play, for he first entangles and binds his antagonist, and not till he is safely secured does he attack him. It is clear, then, that it is not out of any resentment at the spoiling of his work that he kills him, but from a deliberate delight in cruelty. Therefore, out of my mercy to the meanest thing that crawls, do I condemn him, and consider him as only a tolerated, but not beloved, member of the domesticated family of Nature. I tolerate him, because “there is a good even in things evil:” for who can doubt that it was his ancestor-spiders that taught imitative Man the whole art and mystery of weaving? And who deny that they also instructed our fowlers and fishermen in the manner of making nets, as well as in the use of them? Tolerate them, therefore, ye sweeping brooms! Spare them, though they know not how to spare!

But we will leave these smaller fellow-creatures of our homes, and indulge ourselves in

A DISSERTATION ON DOGS.

I love Dogs, "for they are honest creatures, and never fawn on those they like not." No—if they dislike you, they let you know it; but if they like you, none of all the domesticated animals can stand comparison with them for real attachment and faithfulness to man; for unflinching courage in defending his person, and honesty in protecting his property. That their attachment is disinterested we cannot doubt when we look at the blind man's dog, true to him in all his poverty, and repining not at that daily imprisonment of the leathern leading-string. What but pure affection could induce such a poor, wandering, free-prisoner of the streets, when he is at night loosed from his thrall, to allow himself quietly to be strapped to that living log his blind master next morning? Nothing, surely, but genuine love could thus content a dog, that might be free if he would, with such a life of restraint and beggary. How often, in passing through Portugal-street, have I pitied that poor beast that patiently sits perched on end there with two or three specimen bundles of matches between his faithful paws, from "morn to eve, a summer's day;" his dark master meantime pouring forth his pity-stirring plaints, with that beseeching earnestness of prayer and benedictory piety of blessing to which none but your stone-blind beggars ever attain! But blessings, and brimstones, and the silent eloquence of poor Tray, only bring into his poor exchequer some daily small amount of two-hourly-dropping halfpennies, to the exquisite soreness of poor John's petitioning knees, and the cold numbing of poor Tray's cramped tail, that wags no more than does that stone lion's over the lordly house of the Northumberlands. Reader, if ever thy "due feet" wander that way, "look with an eye of pity," not so much, on that lightless man who would sell thee the means of light, as on his patient dog, and drop one pious penny in the blind man's beaver!

Dogs have no pride—that is, none of that vulgar pride which makes the new-suited Hobbs oblivious of his old friend Dobbs, because his black coat is white at the seams, and his hat bare and brown with over-brushing. You never saw a dog ashamed of his master among the showy people on Sunday, because he was not so genteel as they. If he has not a foot to his—pooh—I mean, not a shoe to his foot, he is as warmly affectionate in his attentions as if Stultz had perfected his pantaloons, and Hoby had built his boots. He is a poor man's dog, and is not ashamed of it, but sticks to his ragged heels, and follows him like his shadow. He sees a four-footed fellow, with not half his personal pretensions to the patronage of the well-to-do—sleek, well-fed, washed, combed, and carefully tended—but he envies him not: he is welcome to his “pride of place:” he jogs on as faithful as ever after his mean master; if he was waylaid would defend him, and if he died would mourn him perhaps much longer than his widow, or his friends and old associates.

Keeping a dog is a poor man's luxury; like mustard and bread without beef. Look there at that fine fellow of a terrier, honest Pincher. That is his master, Jem Figgins, whom he follows up so closely with his nose between his calves. Jem is a much more dirty and slovenly dog to look at than Pincher; but Pincher is not particular. There is a hole in the heel of Mr. Figgins's stocking: Pincher sees it as if he saw it not, or thought it of no great consequence, an inadvertence, an accident of the day, while darns are, as some one has said, premeditated poverty: he leaves it to such a puppy as Perkins is to make impertinent remarks upon such a plain accident of the day: Pincher is superior to such groundling criticism. If his master is a little negligent of himself, he never neglects Pincher—which is one reason, and a good one, why he loves him, and is not ashamed of him, and dodges after him, here, there, and everywhere. If Figgins drops into an Independent Chapel, Pincher drops in too, and behaves himself decorously, curling

himself up quietly out of the way, under the seat, where his master places his hat. If Figgins drops into a "dry ground for skittles," Pincher drops in too; and though he does not play himself, looks on with a knowing air as if he did, and sees fair play; and if any dispute arises about the reckoning, and the disputants come to blows, Pincher interferes in Figgins's favour, by pinning his antagonist down to the skittle-ground: If, when all the rest of the company pay their scores, Figgins chalks up his, Pincher thinks it no disgrace to be the dog of a man in debt. Were his master compelled to surrender himself to the Queen's Bench or Whitecross Street, he would go into voluntary confinement for his sake: it would be a prison to his master, but not to him. He is a part of him—shares his crust, his cares, his wants—puts up with his bad tempers, and is sufficiently repaid for all the kicks he gives him when surly if he gives him a caress when better-humoured. As Burns has strongly said—"Man is the god of the Dog;" and Pincher is therefore faithful to his domestic deity, Jem Figgins—a much more respectable god than many of the divinities worshipped by old Greece and Rome.

Seeing, then, these admirable characteristics of dogs, it has surprised me sometimes that any man with the least drop of the milk of humanity in his breast should feel uneasy at being called "Dog!" Those Greek-grinding, opium-chewing ruffians, the Turks, fling the term as a stone of reproach at the foreheads of Christians. To me it seems a handsome compliment; and nothing but being kicked in the same breath like a dog would convince me that it was not a compliment; and even then I should have some doubts whether the kicks were not intended merely to impress a lasting sense of the compliment, and jog the sluggish memory, which is ever slow in recording these remembrances, and sometimes goes to sleep over her notes. To be called dog is no disgrace, if I feel that I have genuine dog qualifications to bear out the epithet. To be called "puppy" is put-up-with-able. But if an impertinent fellow,

Turk or no Turk, instead of calling me generally "dog," went into particularities, and designated me spaniel or pug, I might take leave to be offended; because I dislike spaniels for their fawning, and pugs for their useless littleness and *pugnacity*—a word, no doubt, derived from their impertinent tempers. Pugs are as libellous of the nobler race of dogs as monkeys and dandies and puppies are of men. After these, the whole families of French shocks, and poodles, and ladies' lap-dogs, are obnoxious to my high estimation of dogs in the abstract. I can, indeed, never feel anything but indignation when I observe a wealthy woman lavishing affection on these ugly monsters, which, if bestowed on some friendless little orphan, might rescue him from want and misery, at less expense than is lavished on one of these wiry-haired aliens. When I see one of these pampered brutes waddling and wheezing after its mistress, I am perplexed which most I should despise: but as I venerate all petticoats, I satisfy my spleen with despising the dog, because I am reluctant to despise his dame. Who, that has seen a tall, manly fellow of a lady's lackey carrying one of these white enormities under his arm, could resist a feeling of indignation that even a man in livery should be degraded by so unmanly an office? But when I have met some fair spinster hugging one of these monstrous affection-stealers, I have wished that I was an overseer of the poor, with arbitrary power to snatch away these undue favourites from their arms, and, in their stead, place some little orphan or foundling among human creatures in their place, and taking the forsaken child from the half-feeding work-house, send the well-fed dog there as its substitute. Would that this could be done by force of pens rather than by force of arms! Would that one of those fair sinners against the tenderly-beautiful affections of her sex could be converted from her error by this hint at its enormity! How much handsomer would a handsome woman look followed by two or three chubby children as her attendants, though in the livery of dependence,

than by the same retinue of French dogs? Even that exploded piece of state, of having a black boy at their heels, was a more humane fashion.

An ingenious friend of mine has this singular notion upon the subject of dog-fancying—that you may infer the peculiar disposition of a man from the choice of his dog. As thus. If he selects a spaniel, not for sporting purposes, but as a companion, he infers that he loves to be flattered, and that he has himself a taste for fawning on others: if he chooses a pug, that he is prone to impertinence, but impotent and insignificant; if a cur, that he is savage and sly, sneaking and cowardly; if a bull-dog, that he is obstinate and unyielding when angry, but harmless, though surly, when in good-humour: if a Newfoundland (the noblest of all dogs), that he is courageous, gentle, and generous, and is so far a philanthropist that he would not let a man drown without making an effort to save him; if a terrier, that he is ferretish, sharp-scented, and keen in his pursuits, whatever they may be, and that he is a lawyer, or should have been one. This crotchet of my friend is at least ingenious, and may be true in some respects. One may, indeed, observe a peculiar congeniality in disposition between some men and certain animals. One man shall resemble a fox in craftiness; a second, a monkey in mischievousness; a third, an ass in intellect; and so on, down the many-linked chain of men and up the variously-linked chain of animals. Some one has confessed that “all are not men that wear the human form;” nor are all dogs that wear the habit of dogs. But I will not be proscribing and invidious, and set the malicious and the cruel, who are always on the watch for an excuse for their brutality, kicking and stoning all dogs, or men, not deserving of their distinguishing titles.

Dogs have more instinct, sagacity, and intellect, than any other animal. Recorded instances of their tenacious memories of men, times, places, and circumstances; of the strength and endurance of their attachments: of their reflective powers, that seem wisely to weigh the

consequences of their own actions and the actions of others, are "as plentiful as blackberries." As a proof of their benevolence, I shall not easily forget the scene I once witnessed, wherein a noble Newfoundland dog would not suffer a small dog of the mongrel breed quietly to swim about a pond, but, imagining that he was in danger of drowning, plunged in after him, and brought him in his mouth back to land; and as often as the mongrel was thrown in again, so often did he jump in after him, and bring him to the bank. It was pure dog-philanthropy, if I may say so, and nothing else. It struck me then that a dozen of these brave dogs, trained to the employment, and stationed as assistants to the Humane Society, in spots where they are most frequently wanted—such as by the waters in the two Parks—would perhaps be more instantaneously useful than all the drags and life-boats, ropes and ladders, that invention ever invented.

Dogs certainly understand cause and effect: if their sagacity is not reason, it is as good. A worthy cousin of mine had for a follower as honest a four-footed fellow as ever wagged a tail. That chubby, good-humoured, and most sweet of garlic-loving Spaniards, *Senhor Quixhote* his man Sancho, after whom he was named, and of whom he was in all things worthy, would have hugged him as a hail-fellow, and given him some post of consequence in his government of Barataria. In my humility, I was wont to consider that faithful dog as a sort of relation—a cousin not far removed; and it seemed no great condescension on my part to so useful and affectionate a creature. Sancho was as mild as May and as his master, the mildest and best-natured of men. Sancho's temper, as well as Sancho himself, took after his master. I have noticed that where the master is what is domestically called "a devil," the dog is also a devil; and where "the governor" is the reverse, the dog is as angelic as any tailed thing on four legs can be. What sagacity, amounting to profound reflection, would that most honest of dogs (to his

master) display when he carried off a neighbour's cold mutton! How have I admired his economy, when I have seen him engaged in burying in the garden what he could not eat to-day, that it might be sweet and eatable to-morrow! Another instance of his reflective powers—of his habit of weighing and considering things—and I have done. Boys, who never were dogs, and therefore jest at stones, never having felt them, would fling such missiles at poor Sancho as were sure to hit him where he had his tendernesses: but the sagacious Sancho, in the short interval between stone the first and stone the second, always removed the unequal war to where it could not with safety be further waged; and in a moment leaped up to the stone sill of the parlour window, where, knowing that stones could no longer be thrown without breaking glass as well as bones, he snarled defiance at the pebble-peppering enemy!

The habits of honest Sancho were sometimes thoughtless, and sometimes not a little eccentric. In the youth and heyday of his puppy blood, it was his morning wont to trudge before his gentle-paced master to town, and, in his way, to call at a dog-butcher's, mount himself on his hind legs, pick from the paunch-board the bunch which he thought best and biggest, and then continue his way to town, the cherished bunch swinging and dangling between his teeth. Woe, then, to any four-footed fellow who did more than glance "a longing lingering look behind" at it, or sniff at its passing fragrance! His oldest acquaintances were treated with an indifference very much like what is called *cutting* among old-friend-forgetting men. Even the Chloes and Fannys, who were the delight of his softer hours, were met with a coldness more cruel than scorn; he rejected all their gentle fawnings and female recognitions with a surly growl, which sent them scouring away from him like so many transformed systers of Syrinx from brute-passioned Pan. To do Sancho's temper justice, however, this was only one of those "moods of mind," as Wordsworth calls them, with which the mildest and best of

beings when hungry are moved and troubled. And to do justice to his honesty, I believe that there was an understanding and previous arrangement between Sancho and his master, that the one was to pay for the bunchy breakfast, and the other to eat it.

Some human fiend among the depraved of Dublin threw a new-born living babe into a pig-sty, and the ravenous swine had attacked the helpless little innocent, and were beginning to tear it to pieces, when a dog, hearing the outcry among the swine, and the feeble but piercing wail of an infant—(a household sound to which his sagacious ear had been accustomed, and which he at once knew to be the cry of infantine distress)—ran to the spot, and seeing what was going on, jumped into the middle of the ring, and laying about him right and left, drove off the carnivorous wretches, courageously kept them at bay, and, at the same time, by his vehement barking, drew the attention of his master to the spot. And thus was the little helpless heir of human nature succoured and saved by the honest affection and sagacity of a dog! Ye who calumniate and cruelly use dogs, blush and be more merciful, for here is one of those despised animals with a better heart in his hairy bosom, and more humanity in his nature, than could have beat in the hard bosom of the wretched mother that bore that innocent foundling! The story is to me one of the most remarkable and touching in the entire history of animals. The impulse to save a child in such imminent danger; the faculty of distinguishing its cries; the perception of its danger; the sagacity that knew that those ravenous brutes, the swine, intended the destruction of the child, and that it had not a minute to live if he did not rescue it, and the courage with which he accomplished this, and stood defending his conquest, all is wonderful; and one would wish to think (and it is not profane, I hope, to think so) that some good angel, hovering near, put into the heart of that benevolent animal to save that child, and gave him, for the time, a more than animal intelligence. Could you, my gentle Reader, have understood

• better than he did what was doing, and resolved sooner upon what was to be done? Call it not blind instinct, for you could have done no more, or but little more than did he. If his interposition was but instinct, and was successful, yours could have been no more: so that the results of instinct and reason are the same, the success of their operations. Was there anything left undone to this end which you would have done? One thing only. You would have snatched up the child and borne it away to a place of safety: this noble animal had perhaps the wit and the will to do so too, but was denied the means.

Let us now turn from those noble animals, Dogs, to those ignoble animals (for so they are unjustly made),

A S S E S.

These are the worst used and most abused of all the creatures lent to man to administer to his comforts and necessities, and be his faithful servants. An Ass is the only perfect emblem of unrepining patience under persecution. Nature laid one stripe upon his back, and paused, as if she foresaw that unkind hands would lay more upon it, and forbore to mark him more with hers. But the despised Ass, though now the meanest and dirtiest drudge in the labours of man, in better ages held up the humble head which now droops debased to the ground, not as high as Haman's, but loftily too; and wore royal housings, bore royal burdens, carrying, as he did, the indolent beauties of Asia in his and their palmiest and proudest days; and, among the idolatrous, he was worshipped for his virtues of patience and humility, and had a festival in his honour, and had temples, and altars, and songs of praise, and solemn services offered up to him. But now he is a creature despised: for the borne beauties of his better days, he now bears upon his broken-down back creatures more brutal than himself: for his old worship he is now invoked with oaths, curses, and profanities; and for the lofty temple, he is, in winter, housed now

in some wind-and-water-admitting shed, which mocks him with the comforts of rest for his hard-worked bones and hard-faring body: in summer his home is some thistley common or grassless lane at night, after the long, weary labours of the day. So unintermitting is the spirit of persecution against him, and so determined are all ranks to consider and to continue him an eternal beast of burden, that the wealthy ones of the land, who want not his personal services, have even golden images of him on their tables, still burthened with those old breakers of his back, the panniers, but now carrying salt!

But this grave, patient creature is not only misused, but misunderstood. A fellow with half his length of ears, and less than a twentieth part of his wisdom—which is to be patient, thinks himself horribly scandalized if called “an Ass;” whereas, if he was not an ass (however paradoxical it may seem to say so) he should be proud that he was considered one, and think himself the worthier man for having so many assinine virtues added to his own poor commodities. So thought he, that most honest of rogue-regulators and gentle domineerer over delinquents, the worshipful Master Dogberry: witness his impatience, when called “an Ass,” to have it “written down,” that he might have the accidental acknowledgemnt of his patience, his meekness, and grave qualities recorded and made immortal in the archives of the Constabulary. He, honest Headborough, plumed himself upon, and was justly proud and impatient of being pronounced, by a veritable witness and wise young judge, to be “an Ass!” But, out alas, the foolish world, in general, are not like wise.

Gentle Reader! You have, perhaps, peregrinated round the Eastern side of old Smithfield, and have seen, and seeing must have pitied, those poor four-footed pilgrims of the rough roads of life, vulgarly called donkeys? If you have not, “your estate is the more gracious;” but if you would behold with your own eyes what human cruelty is, turn your pilgrim thither on

any day that is called Friday, and in the Eastern corner of that market where animals are bought and sold to slavery, you shall behold some hundreds of these persecuted creatures—witness the hardship and degradation of their condition; see at how low a rate they are held in fee, and to what base uses they are submitted and submit. Our laws, which are sometimes merciful, humanely regulate the hard lot of all creatures but the Ass; he only is without the pale of the law. A brute-man, if he cruelly beats his horse, is forthwith punished; but who steps forward to legislate for the Ass, and protect him from “the oppressor’s wrong?” Blows may rain upon his back as plentifully as his own rough hairs, till his back be broken, but no one vindicates him, and stands up for him! Are they afraid of the “fellow-feeling” which “makes *me* so wondrous kind?”

The Ass, as far as my reading goes, seems to have had Balaams out of number for his riders and drivers; but only one of his race was ever blest with so indulgent a master as that immortal proverbialist, now no more, the gentle-hearted and gentle-handed Sancho; in whose epitaph it should have been written, that he was the ever-to-be-patient Dapple—an eulogy which would have been equally honourable to Master and Ass. But both man and beast died, as is the way of all flesh, and, having no heirs male, have no epitaph, save a verbal, proverbial reputation, which lies not like an engraven elegy, and is more durable than monument of Parian marble, or plate of Corinthian brass. Rest to thy bones, then, that were never unlike those of any other Ass on record—sore with beating, thou most favoured of Asses, honest, ancient Dapple!

“Fear no more the heat of the sun,
Nor the furious winter’s rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and got thy wages;
Princes, sages, peasants must
Follow thee, and come to dust!”

The Ass is humble—too humble; therefore is he despised, and reproached, and made a bye-word of scorn; a creature for contempt to make a mouth at. The Ass vaunts not himself. He stands not in public places champ-ing the bit and tossing the head. He hangeth his head depressedly down, as though lost in melancholy thoughts and contemplations of his hard usage. He has no bit to champ perchance, unless it be indeed such a good god-send as a stray bit of turnip, or the green head of carrot, or some such esculent, the uncared-for droppings of travelling market-cart, picked up in his wanderings about town, his eyes being ever upon the ground. He sometimes follows up a load of hay, and much he longs to pluck a mouthful, to toy withal, and, if it served not, pull another; but he dares not take that licentious liberty, which would be pardonable in your horse, but not in any member of his family; no favourites, and without friends. He exhibits no mettle. No trumpet stirs up the smouldering fire of his blood; it calls him to the battle in vain; he considers his vocation to be strictly civil, and therefore is he silent when the trumpet brays, and laughs not "Hah! hah!" when the battle rages. He has no pride in himself. He puts not his handsomest leg in advance, to admire it. He has no emulation. He paws not the ground, impatient to be gone; he cares not whether he goes or stays. All emulation is dead in him. He runs not in the race of competition; he forfeits, and leaves those who have entered for the start to walk coolly over the course, and carry off the sweepstakes. He has no affectations, but is simple, unassuming, unsophisticated, homely, plain, Jack Ass. *He* affects not to shy at white wayside walls, wheel-barrows, and such like daily commonplaces, merely to show how sensitive he is, and get petted, coaxed, caressed, and made much of: things strange do not frighten him; and if they did, who would believe a moment in his apprehensions? The Ass is said to be slow in obeying; true, but from grave consideration. Having heard a Christian man called "An Ass!" because

he either said or did some foolish thing in haste, which he had reason to repent at leisure, simple Dapple, pondering much on what he heard, resolved from that moment to be circumspect, and haply became a trifle over-anxious not to commit his character by any rashness. Therefore is he deliberate.

He is accused of being obstinate, which he is not, but only circumspect; slow in believing, but, when he believes, slow to be driven from the best of his belief. He adopts his opinions cautiously, and therefore is he not to be lightly moved from the attitude and position he hath taken up, but heroically positive, flinching not from his post and his opinion, stands his ground, as long as he can stand. He is charged with being self-opinionated, too, because he is not blown about with every fresh whiff and puff of public doctrine—takes up no new-fangled or old-fangled heresy or innovation in commonly-received opinions new-revived, but remains a steady adherent to his old first principles. He is called conceited, and charged with brooding, like the dove, “over his own sweet voice,” because he now and then, perhaps once during a moon, brays abroad in the streets, having some matter of natural news to pass on; to telegraph, as it were, from mouth to mouth; to a brother beast of burden waiting afar off, who takes up the tidings, and passes them on, in his turn, to another. If he is conceited, then do I fear that all your spreaders and carriers of intelligence are likewise conceited: that your street-preachers, good, noisy men, are not half so desirous of having a cure of souls, and a curing-house—a chapel—as of showing forth and testifying that they can bray loud enough to be heard afar off. And much more do I fear to think that your parish orators do not, in open vestry, rise so much to second a motion merely for the parish good, as to show that they have lungs which can reach the remotest ends, and startle the boundary-stones, of the parish with their stentoric roar: base fears, and doubts of most disinterested men, which heaven forfend should ever become true!

CATS.

I do not respect Cats, as they run in these degenerate days: certainly not as a body—not as Cats. Individually, I have, here and there, met with one of the race with whom I could be companionably civil, and think somewhat charitably of his coaxings, and fondlings, and other small adulations and ingenuous overtures on his part to a better acquaintance on mine. Seated at the hospitable board of his patron, whether he is but self-invited, or native to the house of my friend, as I respect my host, I respect “the cattle within his gates.” This good understanding has, however, these two to-be-understood exceptions:—I object to having my well-pantalooned legs made a sort of rubbing-post whenever Tom may desire to curry his back and sides of their loose and shedding fur; and, not observing this hairy adornment of my nether garment, I dislike to go forth of that company into another, all over streaked with white or grey hairs, which, detected by the young ladies of the party, furnishes them with no small amusement and much tittering in a corner, and induces them to set me down as one of those old bachelors who are much fonder of their chimney comforts and cat than of more sociable pleasures—which, begging their pardon, (and it is no sooner asked than granted,) is not a failing of mine. Moreover, I have a thin-skinned dislike to have my silk hose made a sort of grappling holdfast for a Cat’s claws when he indulges in a yawn and a stretch; an unlicensed liberty which your Cats, thinking nothing of your economy in the article stockings, will sometimes take with your legs when settled under their master’s mahogany. “To be honest, as this world goes” I will at once confess that I like not Cats. I dislike their midnight habits, and their vile voices, when they “make the night hideous” with Anacreontic singings, and serenadings, and nuptial epithalamiums, strains which might disturb “a soul under the ribs of Death.” I have sometimes wished that it were possible to charge the watch with these

midnight brawlers, and next day bind them over before Sir F. Roe "to keep the peace." I dislike their predatory inroads upon their neighbours' territories; their house-top ramblings; their guttural lurkings; their sparrow-watchings, and their cruel "going about to devour" the sweet songsters in cages, hung out at the windows of the bird-loving townsmen, who, prisoners themselves, delight in hearing "their native wood-notes wild," and dream of the green fields. Though no amateurs in matters musical, your domestic Cats have a villanous admiration of singing-birds; and though they pretend to tee-totalism, they are as amorous of their afternoon *Canary* as Ben Jonson was when taking his "ease in his inn."

Cats are domestic, it is true—too much so sometimes—for they are always either getting under your feet, or else in some corner of your house, where they should not be: indeed their virtues kick the beam when their vices are put into the scale. Cats are naturally selfish, or they are corrupted into selfishness by Cat-customs, or the force of bad example. They exhibit none of that pure affectionate attachment to man which Dogs show for him. Who ever heard of a Cat dying of grief for the death of her master? Who ever heard of a Cat protecting her master's mutton from marauders? He or she is more likely to go snacks, and pick a bit with the burglars. In my late wanderings about town, I have met with a Cat who affected so much attachment to an old Watchman, that she followed him, nightly, and all night long, through Winter and Summer, street and alley, the whole round of his beat—whether the town-rinsing rains wetted her water-disliking feet—whether the white snows numbed them, or only puzzled her poor wits with the soft indistinctness of their tread. Her ancient master—proud of this singular instance of feline flattery—protested that disinterested love alone led her to follow the wandering lantern-light of his dark fortunes; and that he gave her nothing but good words and gentle caresses, which keep no cats and butter no parsnips. As

I hope to be charitable in my opinions both of men and Cats, I suspect the disinterestedness of her love, and doubt whether it was not rather that, in imitation of her vigilant master, she might "comprehend all vagrom" mice, as he did men, when they were safely apprehendable, and "bid any mouse stand" in Hunger's name.

Cats have a propensity to cruelty which the humane cannot patiently bear to see, nor tolerate. It is a piteous sight to see one of these inhuman creatures kicking and cuffing, and playing with that harmless little free-booter, the domestic Mouse—now tantalizing him with the momentary hope of liberty by letting him run a board's length; and then, springing upon him with tiger-like bound, striking a fierce, fastening fang through his thinly-furred pelisse, and crippling him, swearing the while at his audacious endeavouring after liberty. Then, dropping him from her voracious jaws, see her flatter the poor wretch again with the delusive hope of life, and, as soon as he stirs, spring on him tiger-like, playing with his agonies, and sporting with his hopes and fears, till the sense of power of the tyrant is sufficiently flattered and acknowledged by the weak captive; as he lies panting and powerless at her feet. The sport at last growing wearisome, and the carnivorous appetite being next to be indulged, the poor prisoner is at last put out of misery—not from any remorse at her cruelty, or for his gratification, but for her own. This torturing ceremony—and no mouse seems palatable till it is gone through—is the *sauce epicurienne* to mouse-meat, and is, perhaps, as necessary to its tenderness as whipping is to the tender delicacy of your sucking-pig. It may be agreeable to the nature of the animal to be thus cruel; and who can say for what ends—perhaps wise ones—this disposition was given to it? But we may rationally and humanely object to see, and are not bound to admire, in brutes, propensities which we abhor in men—cruelty being one of the worst. These cruelties remind one a little too much of the tortures which captives underwent among the Cat-like savages of Ame-

rica, to permit one to think patiently of "those budge doctors of the Stoic fur"—Cats: while, at the same time, they humble our assuming pride by showing us that if *they* are cruel, Man, their lord and superior, can be as much a beast of prey, and take as savage a delight in torturing the creatures under him.

Kittens, their juvenile diminutives, are the playfullest and prettiest playfellows in nature and a snug parlour. 'Tis pity but it were possible that "once a kitten could be always a kitten;" but kittens will, in their ignorance of the unamiable and unlovable nature of their grown-up fellows, become Cats, and so lose all their happy relish for the simple sports of their kittenhood, and lose, too, the love of those who admired them. It is a pity that the ignorant and happy youth should be born with this absurd propensity for becoming the wiser, and therefore unhappier maturity; but as Wordsworth says, "the kit is father of the cat;" and it is surprising what an unamiable reprobate Cat an amiable and un-reprobated Kitten will make! Who does not delight in seeing these little "dappled fools" playing their merry antics about his feet—now running round after their own tails, and now after their mother's, or biting them by the ears, or patting them in the face, their matrons all the while looking most deterringly grave, as who should say "Consider, Master Kitten," or Miss Kitten, as it may be, "the respect which is due to my maternity!" But they, frolic little fellows, will have their play; and now they set off on the scamper and whisk after some new sport, to crouch and leap after a fly—thus showing either their inherent natures, or else the soon-learned vices of example; or else they chase the rolling ball, or perplex the fallen worsted round the legs of chairs and tables; or toss and follow the fluttering fallen leaves of autumn,—

"Like an Indian conjuror,
Playing now with three or four;"

and now perk their prim faces on this side, and now on

the other—arch, yet innocent, as young mirth and playfulness ever is. Alas! that blissful ignorance should ever grow unhappily wise! But it must be; and if my pen could weep tears, it would not avail.

I contend, in the innocent faces of all the kittens in Christendom, that matured Cats are selfish, hypocritical, cruel, unattachable, disloyal, dishonest, and not to be trusted in breakfast-parlour or butler's-pantry, for they have always their white whiskers in the cream of the one, and their paws in the butter-coolers of the other. This harsh opinion of mine is not singular: the most tolerant of opinionists have held the same. I shall not soon forget the anathema of an ingenious literary friend of mine—who, after dangling at the heels of a patron, to no end but the ending of the day, returned home at nightfall to deceive and mortify his hunger with a solitary mutton-chop; but, on a diligent search of the remotest corners of his cupboard, found that it was lost—if anything can be said to be lost when you know where it is, for, in his rummaging, he routed out a Cat who could not boast of even an intimacy with him, much less an invitation to supper. After he had turned out the uninitiate Cat without either kick or cuff—for hunger had made him humane—his mild rage became ebullient, and its first ebullition vented itself in these lively denunciations against the whole race of the Felinas and Toms! “Woe unto ye, ye prowlers over high house-tops and low pent-houses! Never more shall one of ye find chop of mutton or steak of beef in any present or future corner cupboard of mine, to tempt ye to rob him who is more hungry than yourselves! Put not your trust in me, nor your tails in the way of my feet, for I will not turn my toes out to spare them from their inevitable weight and pressure! Here do I banish ye for ever from bed and board of mine! Howl not, therefore, under my window your love-laments; for the deluging water-pot shall incontinently wash ye from the heights of your happiness, and scatter ye like chaff under the winnow! Bask not on any sunny wall

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nearer than the far wall of Pekin, or the pelted missile shall most surely reach you! Ye pretend attachment to man; but it is all sheer fudge and base hypocrisy: attachment to yourselves is the real sentiment of your breasts. Ye affect, too, to be domestic; but look at yourselves in summer, scampering and scouting through the rarest of tulip-beds after butterflies, and sneaking away from bees, because ye fear their courageous stings; or lying perdue in the grass, or under dark bushes, to pounce on the harmless robin, who really loves man, and puts his trust in him; or else sleeping on the walls in the sun; or disturbing the snore of the house with your moonlight murders of silence, and lascivious *conversazioni*, that put a blush even upon the black cheek of Night. Look at these actions, and 'hide your diminished' *tails*. In winter, to be sure, ye are more within doors, and one or more of ye may always be found, when most not wanted, very contentedly squatted or stretched on the rug before the parlour-fire; because there is less of 'disturbance rude' than ye meet with in the kitchen. Ah, ye base and treacherous! Let ye have your own way, and ye will sit all day and wink at the fire, and then at him who has drawn his chair as near to it as ye will allow him, as who should say 'My feet are extremely comfortable:' but ye care not so much as a mouse's squeak for *his* feet, whether they are comfortable or cold; and now ye glance a green eye at the toast before the fire, and wish he would leave the room for a book in the library; and now ye look under the grate as the burning ashes drop there, and fear each falling coal to be a mouse—fear it, because ye would willingly be spared the trouble of doing your duty; and now ye purr and sing your tea-kettle balderdash; and affect to be very sincerely attached to your master's service, when, if his neighbour gave greater board-wages, ye would leave him at a minute's warning, in the middle of a rat's squeak. Ye affect to be disinterested; but let him exhaust the toast-plate of its contents, and give ye none *of it*; let him suffer the fire to go out, and the room to

grow cold, and ye soon begin to suspect that you hear a mouse in the kitchen, where there is a good fire and scraps, or, at least, preparations for supper going on; and not being able to wear the disguise of disinterestedness any longer, ye grow peevish as the porcupine, and cry nothing but 'mew,' till the parlour-door be opened, and ye are once more cozy, and comfortably stretched and basking before a brisk fire, with the prospect of a stale chop before ye, or the certain knowledge of where ye can steal one. Go—ye hypocritical pretenders to the social 'charities of life,' and—

'Never more be officers of mine!'

Honestly, there is too much truth in this; and I cannot help agreeing with him in his severe opinion, though I am, at least, in matters of opinion—which cost nothing, you know—as charitable as Hogarth's Poor's-box, with a cobweb over the mouth of it.

Cats are not so much in use as formerly; at least, for useful purposes. As, while living, they possess the vocal power of uttering an extremely disagreeable series of dissonant noises, so, when dead, consistent with their lives (which, as they are said to amount to nine, may be inferred to be in some sort sacred to "the Nine-stringed Heaven"), their bowels, which had no compassion for the ears of man while lubricated, when carefully dried and then drawn tight by screws over the bridges of violins, touch them never so lightly, and they begin to squeak, shriek, and utter such shrill sounds as it is "a misery to hear." Another use of Cats—not so common, and more agreeable when resorted to—is as a measure of capacity in ascertaining the size of a suite of apartments. A single gentleman, in search of lodgings to let, usually measures the quantity of accommodation they promise by remarking, that "The rooms are really too confined, madam! There is not space enough to swing a cat in;" and tries somewhere else, where there is,

A DAY IN THE LIFE

OF

SIR VANE VAGARY, BART.

I HAVE, I think, already introduced my readers to that hearty, plethoric, red-faced, silvery-bearded, flaxen-wigged, obstinate-headed, hair-brained, warm-tempered, warm-hearted, vagarious old gentleman, Sir Vane Vagary, of Turnstile Hall, Woodvale, in the county of Warwickshire—Shakspeare's Warwickshire; and I have sometimes thought that either a portion of Shakspeare's blood, or some unused remainder of his humour, flows in the full veins, and works in the warm head and heart of the worthy, whimsical, "fine old English gentleman," who, to paraphrase the gentle Drummond's verse,

"——— in all forms, at home, abroad doth range,
And only constant is in constant change."

But I shall, perhaps, best show the man as he is by allowing him to exhibit himself in his own way, as his humours moved him and kept him going through one day at Turnstile Hall and the parts adjacent.

The vagarious Sir Vane was to have led the hunt on the morning of the day I have selected; but having risen two minutes and ten seconds later than his usual rising-hour of four—an error in his valet's time-keeper being the cause of so unusual a deviation from his punctual regularity—all the preconcerted proceedings which he meant overnight to abide by, but never did next day, were disconcerted and deranged, and it was now too late for him to do anything, except exhaust his vocabulary of hard words, not ill supplied, upon the offending head of John Curtis, his valet and gentleman; an exceedingly proper varlet, notwithstanding anything which the passionate old person his master might aver to the contrary; patient as Sir Vane was impatient—silent as he was vociferous—answering not to the thousand cross-questionings of his severe master as to whether

he was not lazy, neglectful, indifferent, a sluggard, a rogue, a rascal, and did not deserve to be horse-whipped, horse-pounded, pumped upon, hanged, drawn, quartered, &c., &c., &c. He knew his master's temperament so thoroughly, having had twenty years' experimental knowledge thereof, that he "let the storm rage on," knowing full well that the louder it blew the sooner it would exhaust itself, and subside into an agreeable hour of calm, all the more enjoyable from the previous hour of hurricane. The storm over, a guinea, or some generous grant of graciousness—such as that he might go to the d—l, or the statute-fair and the dance at night, if he liked, or have all his relations—not a few, and some very remotely related—to visit him, and an unlimited key to "the jolly good ale and old" for which the Hall was celebrated all the country round—patched up a peace between quarrelling master and pacific man for the day, or the hour, as it happened; for Sir Vane did not limit himself to one storm per day, if two were more agreeable, and better carried off his superabundance of humours.

Sir Vane had dreamed (and he did not often dream, and to be disappointed was therefore so much the more provoking) that he was to be first in at the "death of that day's life," the hunt of that identical puss—he knew her again, when taken, by the black spot on her nose)—of which you will hereafter hear the eventful history; and here was an immortality of honour lost for ever!—For the Baronet, being old, was now a more careful rider than he was wont to be in his younger days, and feared that he should never more lead the field as he had led it, yet hoped he might, and, if dreams are ever true, might have done that day, and thus have restored the fallen honours of his hunting fame, and added another brush to the brushes of other days. When the whipper-in entered his bed-chamber, therefore, at half-past four, Sir Vane incontinently whipped him out again, and not a limb or bone of the body of Guy Gubbins, the said whipper-in, escaped from before him without a cut or a curse to keep them com-

pany. "This is as good as a goulden guinea in my way," muttered the calculating Mr. Guy as he limped down the stairs, and hobbled as if he was hurt out of the Hall; but as soon as he was out of sight of Sir Vane, he only rubbed his elbow once, and walked as well as ever. Sir Vane then ordered his boots to be brought up, which immediately entered, one dangling by the straps to a finger of each hand of young Master Joe Snacks, the hopeful young nephew of Mr. Jonathan Snacks, butler at the Hall. Joe, at a glance, saw what was brewing, and instinctively dropped the boots, and fled the presence—an indubitable mark of cowardice, which was followed by a severe reprehension in the shape of a boot-jack; and Jack and Joe flew scuttling down the stairs, Joe into a side-chamber on the first landing-place, and the jack smash through the window which lighted it. Sir Vane then essayed to pull on his boots, but, although he had pulled them on a hundred times, not a foot could he get into them now; and he pulled, and he pulled again, till he was first as red in the face as a cabbage when it is red, and next as black as his boots: the last pull, a high-pressure, passionate pull, broke away both straps, and the flung-away boot would have broken the head of poor, patient Curtis, who was just at that moment entering the room; but he, wise man, saw the inevitable consequence, and, ducking his head, waived his privilege in favour of a plaster bust of the late Dr. Dullskull, the renowned rector of an adjoining parish—once the idol of Sir Vane, because he was a dashing hunter, though a dull divine, except after the fourth bottle, when he preached like Cassio. The unintellectual head of Dr. Dullskull was not insensible to a boot-jack, and fell in fragments to the floor. Sir Vane then, as he was in the humour for pulling, pulled a bell-rope down, which brought up his steward, Mr. David Dotup, a respectable person whom Sir Vane respected, for he was that uncommon steward—an honest man. Peremptory orders were issued to Mr. Dotup to *sell off* the stud of hunters immediately, directly, and

at once, for he, Sir Vane, should never again rise early enough to hunt with them: the under-strappers of the kennel were ordered to hang all the dogs, excepting Spite, an ill-tempered old hound and most especial favourite with Sir Vane, and, that done, hang themselves for all he cared. A second bell, which kept its place, though most severely tried, brought up the cook, Mr. Francis Fry, white in the face as his white cap at so early a summons. Sir Vane commanded him, at his peril, to serve up dinner in an hour, for it was too late for breakfast. "Serve it up directly, Sir Vane!" said Mr. Fry; and he descended as fast as he could fly into the Tartarean regions where he served, not half so hot, he knew, as those regions where his master reigned.

Mrs. Patience Vagary, lady of Mr. Clement Vagary, only son and heir of the moody Baronet, hearing the hum and clamour of the distant fray from her bed-chamber in the right wing of the Hall, hurried on her morning-wrapper, and made a forced march up to the scene of action. Now Sir Vane, though more than a match for the most obstinate of men, was no match for the most positive and termagant of women; and Mrs. Patience, who was all this, entering the room just as preparations were on foot for kicking every living thing out of it, no sooner showed herself, and no sooner raised her potent voice, shrill and startling as a trumpet, with an exclamation of "Heyday, Sir Vane!—What bedlam! crew has broken into the Hall?"—than a sudden hush and silence spread around, disturbed only by herself. Sir Vane was calm; Curtis looked relieved and thankful for her timely interference—Mr. Dotup twirled his thumbs—and little Joe, feeling that he was safe, stole softly up the stairs, to see peace restored. That "fire drives out fire" was a favourite medical maxim of the family apothecary, Dr. Coltsfoot;—Mrs. Vagary knew her powers, and was preparing to apply them, when Sir Vane, not so patient of her remedy as he was wont to be, broke out again. But it was in vain: so, after a raking fire of cracking, bouncing, and stuttering,

having exhausted his old stock of imprecations, and no time being allowed him for the invention of new, he began to slacken his cannonade, while Mrs. Vagary still kept up a well-directed fire. In five minutes he was as cool as an ice-house in the dog-days, and as quiet as a scold on the ducking-stool; when, signs of submission being hung out by Sir Vane, Mrs. Vagary ceased firing, and after a short parley, during which the preliminaries of peace were agreed upon, and the usual concessions conceded by both parties, she beat a retreat by boxing Joe's curious ears for listening at the door—strutted off the field with the erected crest of triumph—and peace was perfectly restored. Orders were now calmly given that breakfast should be served to Sir Vane in his study, whereto he retreated, as, I know not by what sudden freak, he now determined to dedicate the day, lost to hunting, to literature. A pet essay of Sir Vane, on "Progressive Motion," had lain unmoved for many a long day between the oblivious covers of a backgammon-board, hoary with the dust of ten dust-shedding years, which, having been tumbled out of its corner by the same boot and blow which brought down the bust of Dr. Dullskull, gave up its long-forgotten contents—dice, dice-boxes, men, and the invaluable manuscript, which was now once more the favourite of the hour, and was to be re-read and re-touched, finally. In a short time, however, fresh orders were issued; and the one-horse *solitaire*, as Sir Vane called it—or the *sulky* as it was nicknamed by the servants (for he never used it save when he had quarrelled with all about him)—was ordered to be ready in an hour, as a drive might afford him new ideas upon his favourite "Progressive Motion." Breakfast being hastily swallowed, Sir Vane might be heard charging the most industrious old servant in the hall with idleness; and in the next minute, with his accustomed inconsistency, he was seen fondling and patting the fat neck of old Argus, the laziest horse in his stable—so resolutely indolent, that it cost the Baronet a *quarter* of an hour's hard exertion, besides two broom-

sticks broken upon his back, to rouse him up from the straw in his stall. But having got him fairly on his legs, swollen with indolence and long disuse, he soon made it up with the old lazy-bones; dragged him by force of arms from his beloved stall, as loth to leave it as a prebend; and, in contemptuous disdain of all his grooms' assistance, backed him at last between the shafts of the solitaire, and harnessed him with his own hands. All being ready for starting, Sir Vane in his seat, the whip and reins in his hands, he bade the grooms and coachmen go to bed again, for a pack of indolent hounds and sluggards, and, after a deal of whipping and coaxing, got old Argus to understand that he was to make the next move, which at last he did, and the lumbering vehicle and lumbering horse in a few minutes more were seen waddling, and pitching, and rolling out of the stable-yard. Their master not yet out of hearing, grooms, helpers, coachmen, harness-boy, and Master Joe, having shut-to the stable-doors, to keep their enjoyment of the joke as snug as possible, entertained themselves with a glorious guffaw at their good old passionate master's private expense; but they loved him, though they laughed at him, the graceless varlets!

It was as fine a September morning as ever brightened up the benevolent face of good old mother Nature. The trees, slightly brushed by the wanton wings of the gently-stirring winds, turned the backs of their leaves upwards, their silvery drops of dew slid softly off, and in a few minutes Sir Vane's broad beaver was as thickly studded with diamonds of the first water of the day as the turban of an Eastern emperor. In no long time, Sir Vane and the arthritic Argus, who had by this time made up his mind that he could move, and was indulging his indulgent master with a shambling sort of walk, quite easy to himself, had got into one of those narrow deep green lanes peculiar to our dear old England, with hedges so thickly set with hazel, wild oak, holly, hawthorn, and scrambling bramble, that the eye could nowhere snatch more than a momentary peep at

the lovely scenery on either side. This, however, Sir Vane cared nothing for, nor did Argus,—both were otherwise employed : Argus on thoughts of the delicious greenness of the short growth of grass about his feet, and longing for a quiet graze off it—Sir Vane intent on thoughts upon “Progressive Motion,” his eyes neither wandering to the left nor to the right, but fixed upon some object in the distance. The garrulous birds poured their blithest songs into his ear—they might as well have sung to Argus : Sir Vane only muttered a surly growl at their loquacity, gave Argus a fillip over the ear, and fell again into his subject.

This lane—hight Lovers’ Lane, because the Damons and the Delias of that ilk could court, and coo, and bill in its embowering shades, unbroken-in upon by passing travellers—this lane had been impassable to any but foot-passengers for many a green year. Sir Vane had perhaps forgotten that : it was his whim, however, to explore it ; but not so Argus’s—for, ever and anon, the low-hanging branches so impeded his progress, that he occasionally halted between two opinions—whether he could go on, or whether he should stand and take counsel upon the matter ; and nothing but an opinion given under the whip-hand of Sir Vane could convince him of the possibility of penetrating further. Things mended as they went on, and Argus had pushed forward uninterruptedly for some time, and had got far down in the descending lane, and the philosopher had almost got at a conclusion in his favourite study, when the considerate, inconsiderate beast made a sudden full-stop in his pace and Sir Vane a break in his cogitations. He looked around ; there were neither straggling underwoods nor dangling branches in the way : the whip-hand, therefore, went to work again ; but Argus stirred not. He had his reasons. Truth to say, Argus did not entirely enter into the spirit of his master’s pursuits in “Progressive Motion ;” neither did he consider it at all times necessary to go over or under all obstacles in the road. He had not been trained to the field, and to leap

over all that opposed his progress : he had been brought up as a coach-horse, and had coach-horse notions of the steady gait, the gravity, and the "dignity of his order ;" and conducted himself, accordingly, with "the strictest sense of propriety." If he erred in these extreme notions of the becoming, the error was to be charged to the limited nature and the original defectiveness of his education, for which he was in no wise to blame. I might palliate his perverse consistency by the old proverb, that "what is bred in the bone," &c. ; but as the marrow of the saying is somewhat musty, I abstain, out of respect to the delicacy of my readers.

Besides Argus's other grave considerations, there was one obstacle not to be got over. He was certainly not a human, but he was a humane creature, which is as good. The obstacle to his proceeding now, it seems, was no other than a sonorously snoring Pedlar, known in those parts, who, being overcome with an early dose of nappy, had "taken measure of an unmade" bed, and was sleeping himself sober across the lane, the right bank his bolster, and for his curtains a gracefully-falling sweep of the weeping willow. And there he lay, taking his ease, not uncomfortably tucked up in a nice, cool, clean, soft bed of wild clover, which Argus thought monstrously abused in being turned to any such vile purpose. There lay the Pedlar directly under his nose, and under his one eye (for Argus was erroneously called Argus by the mistakeful Sir Vane from that defect of vision), and there he might have lain, for gentle Argus, undisturbed, though it must be mentioned that he inquisitively explored the Pedlar's box, as it gaped open in humble imitation of its owner's capacious mouth. Sir Vane had noticed the pause in his progression, but was so wrapt in his abstracted speculations, that he forgot it soon, and thought he had gone on again. Argus had time, therefore, to amuse himself in his own way. He looked at a pair of spurs : they were of the best of all possible silver, but his sides winced at them. He smelt at a horse-bolus : it was pretty and pleasant

enough to the eye, but he turned up his nose at it. Everything was there but the thing he most desired—a mouthful of corn, as a stay and stop-gap between meals. However, as there were some tolerable pickings of wild clover under his nose, and a few fresh tufts of wind-sown florin-grass within reach, he patiently waited the Pedlar's waking and his master's interference.

The studies of our philosopher, predoomed to be crossed, were suddenly brought to an inconclusive conclusion by circumstances unforeseen. Sir Vane being so absorbed that he perceived not the stop and hindrance of all further progression and the manner of the same, Argus, after turning the seeing side of his head round three times, and looking his master in the face, as if he asked for further instructions,—as Sir Vane, in his abstraction, deigned no answer: neither word, nor nod, nor whip, nor sign,—honest Argus could amuse himself in no better manner than by cropping on; for he soon got tired of ogling the Pedlar's box, which, though it might delight many eyes, had no charms for Argus's one eye. Suddenly a beating of the hollow ground, which rolled along like distant thunder, was heard by Argus, who raised his wise head to make acquaintance with the cause thereof. The sound came nigher, and all the air around seemed throbbing like a pulse. And now the yelp of dogs and the cry of men were heard. It was the hunt! Nearer and nearer came the mimic thundering, yet Sir Vane heard it not: he was too lost! Nearer still! 'twas two fields off—'twas at hand! In a moment more, the poor hunted devil of a hare darted through the edge, came forcibly in contact with the wing of the solitaire, and rebounding, and then turning over in the air, fell dead between his feet! Starting up from his deep reverie, as sound as slumber, he looked, like an alarmed sleeper, confused and scared, above, around, before, and behind, as quick as head and eyes could turn. He was soon made conscious of the predicament he stood in. The cheering sound of the hounds in full cry waked up his ears at least with their

music. They were near. With the ardour of a true follower of Nimrod, he sprang upon his feet to look out for them, when, in a moment, the whole pack burst like a torrent upon him; and there, at the bottom of his carriage, with fifty dogs tumbling over him, lay the philosophic investigator of the laws of "Progressive Motion," a victim to a forcible example of the same! In vain he struggled to get free; in vain he rose up, for he was immediately knocked down again—overborne—put down by clamour, like a single Tory in the hands of an election mob of Radicals. He swore, he raved, he tore; but all was thrown away: the eager and remorseless pack still clung to him, and yelled and struggled still to seize the ill-fated hare. The hunters, keen and close in the chase, now came up, and might be seen leaping the hedge at various distances down the lane; some, indeed, so near the spot where the philosopher and the pack were congregated, that dogs, and Sir Vane, and poor bewildered and frightened Argus—(who, all alive now, kicked and plunged, and plunged and kicked again, with as little avail as did his master)—all were in jeopardy of their lives. Sir Vane, however, at last contrived to disengage himself from the dogs, with the loss of his best brown bob-wig; and once more got upon his legs, true to the sport, with a death-halloo in his throat: but there it stuck like the "Amen" of Macbeth; for the last dog which sprang over the hedge (an old one, and a heavy runner) came with his head against the confused head of the Baronet, and gave it so clumsy a contusion, that down he dropped again among the hounds. Sir Vane was not the man to be put down in this fashion, and up he rose again, and, though all danger was now over, still continued ducking, and diving, and bobbing his bald, bobless head. The gentlemen of the hunt had by this time brought up, and might be seen prying curiously over the hedge to see what foolish old gentleman it could be who had placed himself between the horns of such a humorous dilemma; and when, upon investigation of the man, they found it was

no other than Sir Vane Vagary, their old brother-sportsman, so grossly at fault, an enormous shout of laughter shook the welkin like a thunder-burst.

Sleep must indeed be "a comfortable nurse," who, if she does not patronize that "invaluable blessing to mothers—Soothing Syrup," employs some "sweet oblivious antidote" to the wakeful cares of life quite as powerful, if not so patented; for amidst all this hurly-burly, which might have awakened the drowsiest of souls, though sleeping "under the ribs of death," the Pedlar slumbered on; and it was not till silence and composure were in part restored that he waked up. Argus still respected his camp-bed; but the dogs ran over it in all directions, and disturbed him not. Just at the moment he was first perceived, and inquiries were going round who he was, and whether he was alive or dead, up he suddenly started; but, being only half-awakened—his senses still in confusion from the powerful effects of his too early potation, and having dreamt, perhaps, of robbers—he was no sooner aroused than he began bellowing for help, so loudly as to be heard above the yelping of the whole open-mouthed pack, put upon self-vindication and the credit of their characters. Falling on his knees, he begged for pity and his pedlary, conceiving that he had fallen into the evil hands of a most desperate set of robbers—high-Toby-men—respectable villains, who kept horses. The laughter that followed his cries only added to the liveliness of his terrors, as he considered it a sign of hard-heartedness and a disposition to add mockery to cruelty.

This was a diversion in favour of Sir Vane, who, having recovered from his confusion, began to threaten all sorts of pains and penalties of law and whip upon the disturbers of his studious recreations. He had worked himself up into the worst of all possible humours, in which he respected nobody, and knew nobody, and was determined to punish somebody, when, finding that stones would not do, he returned to turf, and, ill-humour availing him nothing, resorted

to good-humour; an excellent emollient, of most miraculous powers; and seizing the dead hare, still lodged between his legs, he gave a sportsman-like shout of triumph, and swung it proudly around his naked head. But even this self-forgetfulness did not succeed: for a laughter-loving wag, reaching over the hedge, and tapping the Baronet with his whip on his bare sconce, inquired "Is there *hare* enough in your hand, old boy, to make you a wig?" The pun told admirably; the laugh was long and loud. Sir Vane put up his hand to his head, and then, and not till then, discovered the unthatched condition of that temple of individual wisdom. He then looked round for his brown bob; a staunch hound was amusing himself, and his canine compeers, with tearing it curl from curl. Vixen—his good neighbour Sir Harry Hurdle's Vixen—had a mouthful of the brown bob, and Sir Vane a mouthful of oaths, ready for spitting out, when a well-timed and more effectual jest burst its way through all impediments. There were but two things which could subdue Sir Vane when up in the stirrups—the superior ill-humour of Mrs. Patience Vagary, not to be disputed with, and the good-humour of a jest. "That dog must be a Tory," said Sir Vane, "or he would never handle an old *Wig* so roughly." The Baronet, as in duty bound, led off the laugh himself: "the Field" joined in with all their hearts and lungs—no "scrannel pipes of straw;" and good mistress Echo, when they had done with it, wound up the merriment with her long laugh conclusive. "Ay, ay," cried Sir Vane, with a satirical smile, "good beldam Echo! that trick of thine, of having the last word, didst learn it at the Hall?" Those brother sportsmen present who knew the character of Mrs. Patience Vagary saw which way Sir Vane had winked his eye, and understood his humour; and another and another lusty peal of laughter followed, in which good Mistress Echo joined again, but this time at her own expense. The humourist was recompensed for all the dangers he had undergone. "Brothers of the antler and the

brush," said Sir Vane, rising. Loud cries of "Order!" "Chair! chair!" were heard on all sides. "Chair!" whispered Echo, softly, in the distance. Sir Vane continued: "You will not deny me the post of honour of being first in at the death?" "No, no!" "Hear! hear!" rang round the field. "The brush, then, is mine!" This honour was allowed the speaker, *una voce*. The head huntsman immediately dismounted, out with his knife, severed the brush, and threw it up to Sir Vane. "May I trouble you, sir, to hand me up my wig, if your dogs are done with it?" said Sir Vane, and he bowed good-humouredly and deferentially to Tom Hudson and the group of dogs, still amusing themselves with towzling and tearing the ill-fated wig. The dogs were whipped off, the bob restored, and placed in its original position, a little disarranged, but not irrecoverably; and Sir Vane resumed his seat amidst uproarious applause.

Meanwhile the Pedlar, sobered by fear, and having found out that he had fallen into no evil hands, took care to show the pleasure that he felt in his present safety by laughing as loudly as the best at the ridiculous position of Sir Vane, who, in revenge, demanded to see his licence, and threatened to commit him to the county gaol for having dared to get drunk and obstruct the "progressive motion" of a magistrate's horse on the king's highway. But the Pedlar, humbling his head into his box, begged loudly for forgiveness, which was granted. Argus, also, who had not been an inattentive observer of the passing scene, finding that all was right, resumed his accustomed ease, and assumed an unaccustomed gaiety; for with his one eye, which was handsome, he began ogling Miss Titup, the prettiest of all possible mares. The lady, however, was of great descent, and a cousin-german of hers had lately beat all before him at Newmarket: the overtures that poor Argus made for a better acquaintance were treated, consequently, with such cool contempt, that a more modest wooer would have been cut clean out of countenance, and,

though a horse, have looked sheepish. Argus put on his very best behaviour, notwithstanding, and held up his head, and bridled his neck, with an air anything but vulgar, though not refined; but to no purpose. He certainly did not deserve this "proud *mare's* contumely," although he could not boast a high-bred pedigree, and was a poor plebeian, by his father's side.

By this time the sportsmen had all recognized Sir Vane, and many rough apologies were made for treating him so unceremoniously, which ended in the whole party, whippers-in and all, being invited to lunch, and dine, if they would honour him, at Turnstile Hall. The jovial invitation was accepted with a jovial alacrity, and the field was immediately in motion for Woodvale. But now an unexpected obstacle arose, as far as poor Sit Vane was concerned: the lane was too narrow to turn the solitaire in! What was to be done? The company was commanded not to wait for him, but to go forward; and once more taking the reins and whip in hand, Sir Vane drove slowly down, reckoning that he could turn off at the end, and so get round to the hall in time to enter with Sir Sampson Satinhair, his perpetual guest, who was as true to the punctual minute of lunch or dinner time as "dial to the sun." The lane was a good mile longer, but Sir Vane was patient with it, and beguiled his way with thinking over the incidents of the morning, and how far they practically illustrated the laws of motion. Argus, made wanton by the high company he had kept, was idly snatching at the green boughs hanging within reach; and, like a poet scrambling for the bays, who, heedless where he treads, gets a fall when he desires a rise, and, instead of decorating his poor head, cracks it, so Argus, having an eye to his sport, and none to his feet, presently stumbled, and came with a horrible thump to the ground. Sir Vane, shaken out of his reverie, and nearly out of the chaise, jumped down, and, flogging the foolish Argus upon his legs, next took to his own, and left both horse and solitaire behind. It was a cut-down tree, lying across the

lane, which Argus had stumbled over now. Ill-fated beast, he was brought home, in a few hours, in the saddest of all possible conditions—with a broken head, which his passionate master had given him, and a broken knee which he had given himself!

Sir Vane arrived at the Hall as red and flaring as the Red Lion, what with passion and perspiration, just half an hour behind Sir Sampson, whom Sir Vane, in his jocosier mood, had called "the *lunchometer* of Turnstile Hall." This was an infringement upon his irregular love of regularity not to be quietly got over. The tempest gathered as he went, and the servants, as they met him, sneaked hastily away. Fortunately, the storm-cloud of his wrath burst just as he was turning the angle of the passage leading to the dining-room. Young Joe Snacks was the successful conductor of its lightning, diverting its course from the parlour to the kitchen. It seems that Joe, who was leaving the room with a tray, in his laudable anxiety to steer out of his master's headlong way, tacked right athwart it. Seizing him with one hand, Sir Vane boxed his ears with the other, and, not content with this, concluded with hoisting him out of his way; and in a moment poor Joe might be seen sprawling like a spread-eagle, at the foot of the stairs, with what is termed "a capital spread" before him; namely, a cold pigeon-pie, a venison pasty, bread, cheese, cruets, a bottle of *noyau*, and "sundry glasses, various." In justice to Sir Vane, it must be said that the position which Joe occupied was partly of his own choosing: for, finding the advantage the enemy had over him, he thought, by a *coup de main*, to secure his rear from attack by throwing himself and baggage into such an entrenchment as a well-staircase afforded; when Sir Vane, seeing through the movement, aided him to complete it by administering that powerful persuader to a retreat, a hot pursuit. Sir Vane was not a merciless antagonist—he gave quarter; and, the heat of the action over, inquired if he was hurt. Joe answered not, but he looked so like what Sir Vane conceived young Master

Mustard-seed, in Shakspeare's play, should look, that he could not choose but laugh; and knowing how unfailing a remedy for an outward bruise was a guinea, he threw him one; and Joe re-entered his native territories with what he considered a handsome subsidy, more than defraying the war-damages.

Sir Vane then walked into the parlour all over smiles; was warmly welcomed by his brother-Nimrods; and the roof of Turnstile Hall shook with hearty peals of laughter at the comic incidents of the morning, which Sir Vane recounted in his own humorous manner. After dinner, the dog who had maltreated his wig was presented, and re-baptized Tory (*vice* Vixen), Sir Vane himself playing the part of minister on the occasion, in which he ludicrously mimicked Dr. Tantivy, a sporting vicar, who was present, with some of the esquirely sheep of his flock, not as their spiritual shepherd, arrayed in sober canonicals, but in a hunting-cap and scarlet frock, and looking more like a whipper-in than a clergyman.

Sir Vane was, by this time, what he termed "mid-way between Dover and Calais," that is to say, "half seas over," and began to roar most boisterously for a song. Ardent was the man called upon, and after having a brace of bumpers almost forced down his throat, by way of clearing it, complied with the call, sang a favourite ballad of Sir Vane's in capital style, and met with all the applause the jovial meeting could award him. The song and the toast then went vociferously round, and every Hark-forward, Hey-Towler, and Tally-ho roared his loudest. Dozen after dozen of the best came up and went down, the god of quaffers only regulated how rapidly, and knew where, till only half a dozen were left sitting, the rest of the pack being under the table. Sir Vane rode his seat with a great deal of dexterity, though he occasionally exhibited symptoms of vertigo, or what he termed "a propensity for ground-tumbling."

The merriment of an hour was the drunkenness of Sir

Sampson. He had carried himself very coyly and charily through the heat of the engagement; but Sir Vane plied him so closely for his own private amusement, and so often insisted upon his "Drinking his glass like a man, and not like a lapping puppy!" that the soft Knight, who behaved himself decorously enough while he remained on his guard, and kept up his garb of gentility, now swore like a gentleman and a man of spirit, as Sir Vane insisted that he should; and when he could no longer articulate, he was carried off by Snacks and Joey to a truckle-bed in Attica—Sir Vane's classical designation for the region of the garrets.

The host then ordered in another dozen, but was informed that all the claret was drunk out. It was impossible! it was a dishonourable trick of Mrs. Patience Vagary's to dissolve the meeting! He snatched a candlestick, for the candle was burnt out, determined to inspect the cellars; I seized the opportunity to conduct him to his chamber, which we reached after a few falls, and much persuasive force and pacifying cajolery, being obliged to blow out the candle which I took myself, that he might not perceive that I was leading him upstairs instead of down. Fortunately, he had forgotten the object of his journey before we had concluded the second flight of stairs, in mounting which we stumbled over Joe, who, having imitated his lord and master in drinking just as much as he could get, had dropped asleep in a corner of the landing-place. "Did yo—you—ev—ever see—see me—I say, did you ever—see—see me—get drunk—yo—yo—you swinish—yo—young puppy?" demanded Sir Vane, slowly and carefully, with all proper precision of speech, feeling perhaps that it was a query not to be hastily put, as much depended upon the answer. "Ye—yes—your honour and worship," candidly hiccupped Joe, deliberately and conscientiously. Sir Vane proffered him a kick for his candour, which Joe, who knew what sort of soles went to his boots, very wisely and advisedly declined: a well-seasoned old banister was, instead of Joe, dislodged

from a station which it had held ever since the erection of Turnstile Hall, three centuries ago. And then the raring, roystering Sir Vane was gotten to his bed, "all by the break of day;" whilst I and Ardent walked up to the hills, to behold the beauty of the morning and talk of books, poets, and their poetry.

Thus, at the beginning of another, ended a day at Turnstile Hall.

BEN JONSON.

WE know too little of the men of genius we would give our hearts away to know more about. We would know, accurately, no matter how minutely, what they were—what they looked like—how they "lived, moved, and had their being"—what were their daily difficulties—how mastered—how they were encouraged—how thwarted—and how they surmounted all, and rose at last pre-eminent. There is a craving void—if not an aching void—in our desire to learn what Shakspeare really and truly was—what were his daily habits of study, labour, ease, and enjoyment—who were his friends—his enemies, if that gentle spirit could have had enemies,—how he rose, and by what gradations, to the great height of his eternal fame—and how, when he had performed "the work of his high calling," forgetful of himself—careless even to injustice to himself—he modestly, with no noise, walked down into the quiet vale of years, and was seen and heard no more!—for let the contemners of his genius say what they will, his was a high and mighty task, well worked out, and nobly and completely finished.

A highly amusing and instructive book might be written upon the little that is known of the lives of all our early poets—piecing and dove-tailing all the scattered facts and allusions made by themselves and their con-

temporaries to the habits and manners of the men—who were their companions, and who their friends, social, worldly, and literary—what were their sources of instruction, how employed—and in how much they were under obligations to them—their competitors, and their imitations and rivalries of each other—how their geniuses grew, and what was their progression. And when facts and data failed the historian of their lives and writings, he should have large liberty of conjecture allowed him to fill up the voids, and work up the mental whole-length portraits of the men.

Ben was, it must be told, a little too fond of the *Mermaid*, and no wonder!—for under the auspices of that fish-and-flesh landlady met a greater combination of men of talent and genius than ever mingled together before or since. The celebrated club held at that equally celebrated tavern originated with Sir Walter Raleigh; and there, for many a long year, Ben Jonson repaired with Shakspeare, the inseparable pair Beaumont and Fletcher, Selden, Carew, Martin, Donne, Robert Herrick, Alleyne the player, and many others, whose names, even at this distant period, call up a mingled feeling of reverence and regret. Here the wit-combats, which Fuller speaks of in his book of *Worthies*, took place. Describing these, he says, “Many were the wit-combats between Shakspeare and Ben Jonson. I behold them, like a Spanish great galleon and an English man-of-war. Master Jonson, like the former, was built far higher in learning—solid, but slow in his performances: Shakspeare, like the latter, less in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention.” Who that now sips his claret at White’s would not prefer to have dropped in at the *Mermaid* in Cornhill, where these brave battles of the brain were fought, and where the quaint and humorous old Ben, forgetting all rivalry with the simple-hearted and unambitious Shakspeare, kept his *table-roarers* about him, as long as butts would flow,

and life would let him, trolling his fine old rough-flavoured songs with a tongue sweet and smooth with canary or sherris sack?

What was said of Herrick will apply without alteration to his friend Ben :—" Our poet seems to have been gifted with no small portion of the conviviality and propensity of that bon-vivant, Falstaff. His relish for sack he records himself in pretty marked characters : whether, like the facetious knight, he flavoured it with sugar, the legend does not inform us." Herrick, perhaps, took so kindly to his cups out of " nice affection" and true filial piety for his poetical father, Jonson : he followed his precepts and his practice, because both were agreeable. Jonson was no wine-and-water poet : he was for no dilutions, no weakenings of the "frantick liquor:" he was for wine, and wit, the heightener of wine : he would not, as Herrick says, "prevaricate" in his loving, unadulterous allegiance to sack ; and when, as Sir John Mennis sings,

" Old sack
Young Herrick took, to entertain
The Muses in a sprightly vein,"

Ben drew up his stool to the table, and did not care if he tossed off a glass with the Reverend Robert, a parson of the true old Protestant, anti-Presbyterian stamp, loving a verse and a tierce of wine in equal proportions, and hating nothing but empty flasks and puritanical Round-heads, as friends and canters-off of water, and enemies and canters against wit. Ben knew right well that wine made him, as it made Herrick,

" Airy, active to be borne,
Like Iphielus, upon the tops of corn ;
----- nimble as the winged Hours,
To dance and caper on the heads of flowers,
And ride the sunbeams."

And when Herrick, in his " Welcome to Sack," invoked Apollo's curse upon himself, if ever he turned

" Apostate to his love ;"

and desired these odious stigmas and circumstances of contempt might fall upon him,—

“Call me ‘the son of Beer,’ and then confine
Me to the tap, the toast, the turf! Let wine
Ne’er shine upon me! May my numbers all
Run to a sudden death and funeral!”

“Amen!” ejaculated pious Ben, and commended honest Master “Anon, anon, Sir!” to bring in another bevy of bottles. Merry doings were done at the *Mermaid* in that day!

Herrick, who was of a kindred spirit, and loved sack as affectionately as *Saint Ben*, as he, in the devotion of good-fellowship, canonizes Jonson, makes us acquainted with some other tavern-haunts of canary-bibbing Ben. Here is an ode to him, which is at once lyrical and Herrickal:

“Ah! Ben,
Say how or when
Shall we, thy guests,
Meet at those lyric feasts
Made at the Sun,
The Dog, the Triple Tun;
Where we such clusters had,
As made us nobly wild, not mad?
And yet each verse of thine
Outdid the meat—outdid the frolick wine!

“My Ben!
Or come agen,
Or send to us
Thy wit’s great everplus:
But teach us yet
Wisely to husband it;
Lest we that talent spend,
And, having once brought to an end
That precious stock, the store
Of such a wit, the world should have no more!”

No wonder that, with these taverning habits, Jonson lived poor, and died no richer. He ceased to swallow sherris and chirp over canary on the 16th August (28th N.S.), 1637. I mention the date for the sake of the keepers of the birth-days and the death-days of the eminent men of old, that they may pledge his name in

solemn silence, and sigh, "O RARE BEN JONSON!" Herrick's epitaph upon him would not be unworthy of his monument:

"Here lies Jonson, with the rest
Of the poets, but the best.
Reader, wouldst thou more have known?
Ask his story, not the stone;
That will speak what this can't tell
Of his glory.—So farewell!"

Hear the hearty Herrick again, how he worships him when he was

"——— dead and gone,
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone!"

Herrick loved "the rare arch-Poet." Hear his "Prayer to Ben!"

"When I a verse shall make,
Know I have pray'd thee,
For old Religion's sake,
SAINT BEN, to aid me!

"Make the way smooth for me,
When I, *thy* HERRICK,
Honouring thee on my knee,
Offer my lyric!

"Candles I'll give to thee,
And a new altar;
And thou, Saint Ben, shalt be
Writ in my Psalter!"

Doth not this smack of sweet affection, of an almost devotional love for his old master in wit, and wine, and verse?

Jonson seems to have reigned, like his learned namesake after him, first professor of dogmatism in the literary circle of his day. He was, however, looked up to with more of good-humoured reverence than his successor in the critical chair. Indeed, his contemporaries appear to have rendered a sort of filial and affectionate obedience to him, which the latter never won from any of his scared and timid worshippers. The one ruled over his literary subjects like a beneficent Bac-

chus; whilst the other rode over his slaves like the idol of Juggernaut, crushing and grinding them to dust with the ponderous wheels of the car wherein he sat self-enshrined.

From the following quaint letter by Howel, the celebrated epistolary writer, we learn, first, that Ben was considered a sort of literary father among the wits who looked up to him: secondly, that Ben was a great collector of *grammars*, which throws a confirming light on his reputed love of the erudite and the verbal; and thirdly, (which illustrates an unnoticed chapter in his domestic history), that either his chimney or his house had twice nearly served him up as a burnt-offering to the domestic Lares. But to the letter: here it is:—

“To my Father, Mr. Ben Jonson.

“FATHER BEN,—‘Nullum fit magnum ingenium sine mixtura dementiæ’ (There’s no great wit without some mixture of madness), so saith the philosopher: nor was he a fool who answered, ‘Nec parvum, sine mixtura stultitiæ’ (Nor small wit without some alloy of foolishness). Touching the first, it is verified in you, for I find that you have been oftentimes mad. You were mad when you writ your ‘Fox,’ and madder when you writ your ‘Alchymist;’ you were mad when you first writ ‘Catiline,’ and stark mad when you writ ‘Sejanus;’ but when you writ your ‘Epigrams,’ and the ‘Magnetic Lady,’ you were not so mad; insomuch as I perceive there be degrees of madness in you. Excuse me that I am so free with you. The madness I mean, is that divine fury, that heating and heightening spirit which Ovid speaks of: ‘Est deus in nobis, agitante calescimus illo:’ that true enthusiasm which transports and elevates the souls of poets above the middle region of vulgar conceptions, and makes them soar up to heaven, to touch the stars with their laurelled heads, to walk in the zodiac with Apollo himself, and command Mercury upon their errands.

"I cannot yet light upon Dr. Davis *his* Welsh Grammar: before Christmas I am promised one. So desiring you to look better hereafter to your charcoal fire and chimney, which I am glad to be one that preserved from burning, this being the second time that Vulcan hath threatened you, it may be because you have spoken ill of his wife, and been too busy with his horns, I rest,

"Your son and contiguous neighbour,

"JAMES HOWEL.

"*Westminster, 27th June, 1629.*"

In a second letter to Father Ben, Howel informs him that he has at last procured him "Dr. Davies *his* Welsh Grammar," and accompanies the present to his poetical parent with some splay-footed verses, which in thought, and sometimes in the turn of the lines, show Howel to have been not unworthy of such a "right merrie and conceited" old father-in-literature. A third letter to Ben contains a French version of the old story—of a lady eating of her lover's heart, served up at table by her jealous and revengeful husband. This frightful tragedy he recommends to Jonson "as choice and rich stuff" to put upon his "loom, and make a web of." In the same letter he tells him "that he had been much censured at court" for falling foul upon Sir Inigo Jones; and flatters him when he says that he had written against the great architect "with a porcupine's quill dipped in gall."

It is remarkable that Howel, who names in the long series of his letters, spreading over many years, almost all the men of note and mark in that great period, never once, that I can find, alludes to Shakspeare, his correspondent's contemporary and friend; never once quotes a line from him, nor names one immortal work of his, as if he had never lived, or was unknown! Was this forgetfulness of him intended as homage of "Father Ben," or was it ignorance and want of appreciation? One can hardly think it was the latter: it is therefore curious.

What an age must that have been in which such men as Sidney, Spenser, Bacon, Lopez de Vega, Calderon, Drayton, Shakspeare, Cervantes, Jonson, Galileo, Quedo, Inigo Jones, John Fletcher, Beaumont, Herrick, Chapman, Ford, Harvey, the great discoverer in anatomy, Selden, the learned wit, and fifty more men almost as eminent, lived and moved upon this stage, seeing and hearing each other, watching each other's rising and setting—basking in the shine—mourning the decline! But great men make great men; and great rulers make great subjects. Heaven has perhaps given us another Elizabeth: is it too much to hope that it may give us another Shakspeare, and contemporaries worthy of him? Let us hope!

THE END.

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